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# TRIAD magazine

October 14, 1977

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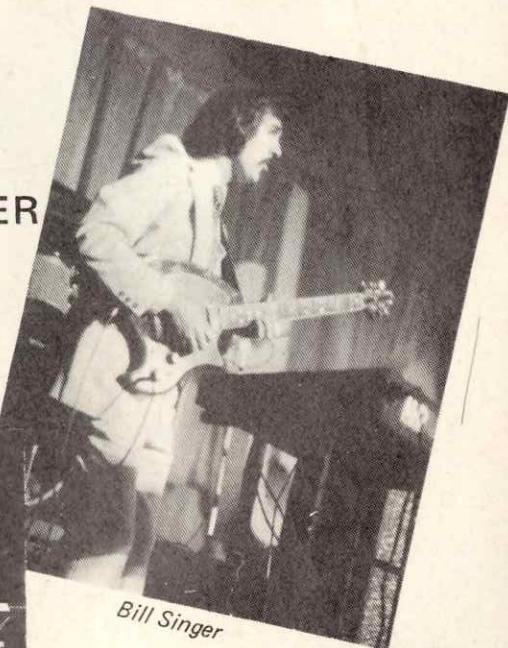
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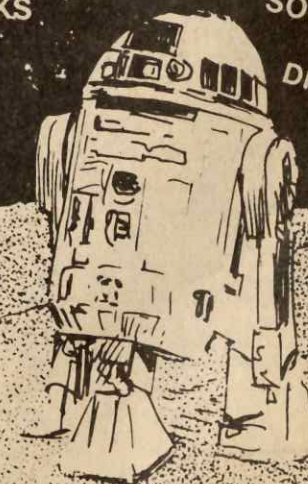


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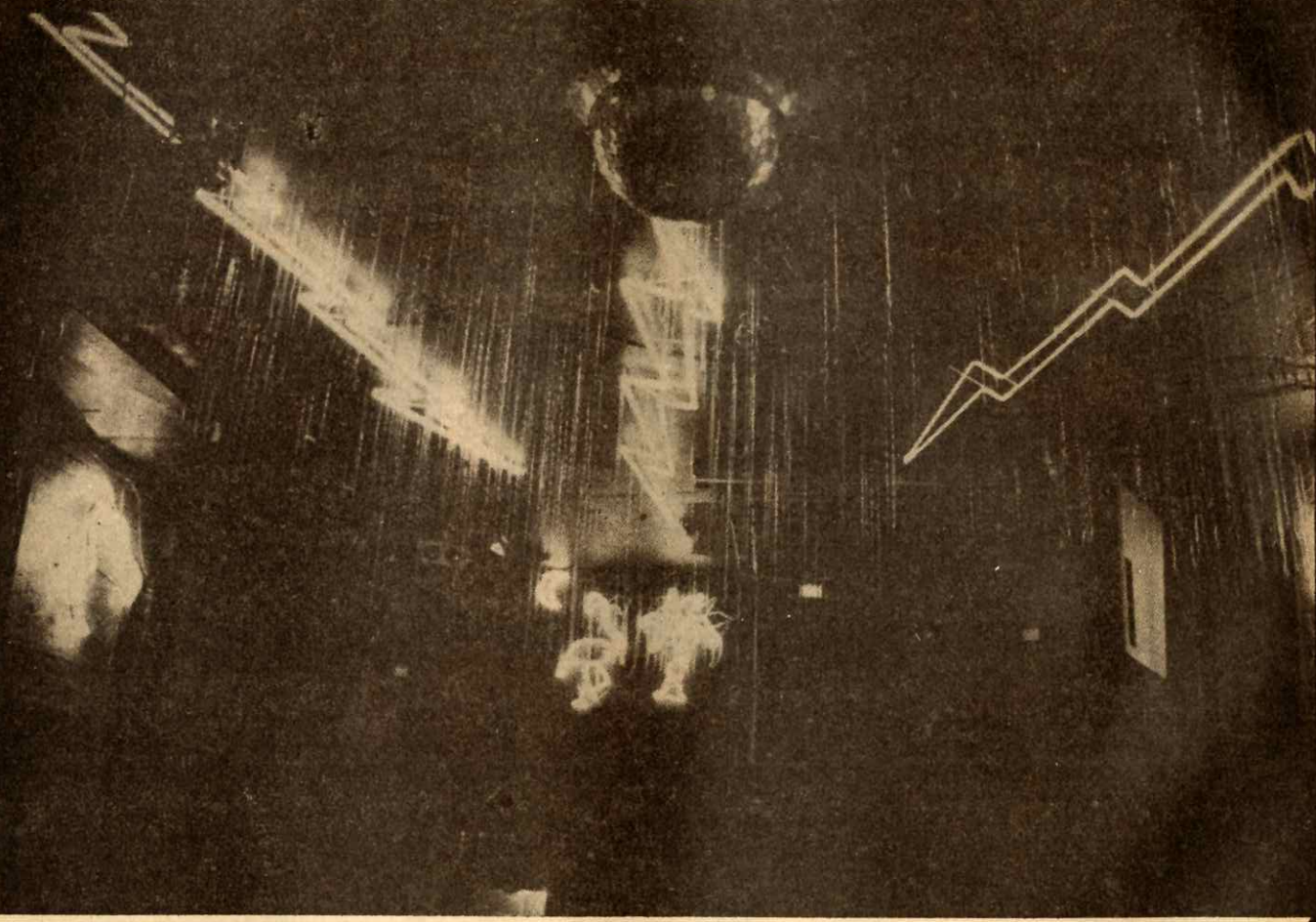
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Greetings and welcome to issue number three under the new regime. I'll use the word lightly because the communication lines here are opening up nicely and everyone is starting to lend a creative hand. If you think that too many cooks spoil the filet mignon, well, for one thing you're eating in a much too expensive restaurant. And for another, you're not able to fully appreciate all the little details that go into making TRIAD what it is; a great free rock 'zine. We love to do it, so just keep pickin' us up every two weeks.

As a public service this issue we're answering the new wave musical question, "What's a La Mere Vipere?" Those who already know will no doubt be interested to find out the whys and hows of Chicago's first punk playhouse, and those who don't will hopefully be intrigued enough to go down and check it out at some point. By eliminating some of the mystery (but leaving the discovery of how much fun it is up to you), we hope La Mere and punk can get even bigger in this town. From several reports the scene is diminishing in N.Y., so it could be up to us to keep the safety pins rolling.

Staying in Chi-town for a while, we're really proud to be bringing you one of the first major stories on the Hounds. The band's been kicking around the backstreets for a few years, and the release of their album next February could do for Chicago what Aerosmith did for Boston. Hard rock at its finest is on its way around the country.

A more closed-mouth duo you'd never hope to meet, but Walter Becker and Donald Fagen (a.k.a. Steely Dan) had a lengthy chat with TRIAD recently, and some questions about their music and their future were thoughtfully cleared up. Clearly, only their fans stand between the Dan and obscurity, and if you number yourself among them the interview will make interesting reading.

Full circle, back to the punky side of things, there's also a little introduction to Bob Getlof of the Boomtown Rats. As Ireland's first major punk band, the Rats are determined to get out of the sewer and into the hearts of America. With the atmosphere that it is now that shouldn't be too hard.

All this plus the debut of "Odds & Sods," a little page of news that will keep more than one gossip fence busy, as well as a much improved concert calendar. The usual books, plays, and movies are covered too, and somehow we managed to get everything pretty timely for a change. If you do something long enough it's bound to start coming out right sooner or later.

Still in the planning stages is the October 28 edition of TRIAD, but I can tell you that we'll have some words of wisdom from the one and only Frank Zappa. Also, a look at some of the new wave music from the South, and I don't mean Hammond. Groups like Sea Level and Grinderswitch are doing things their own way, and its about time folks started turning their ears in that direction. Whatever else happens it's sure to be fine reading, so we hope ya'll be checkin' it out.

So enjoy this little gem - have fun coloring in the pictures in the centerfold (sorry we couldn't provide crayons), and have a good couple of weeks. We'll see ya just before Halloween, and remember. . . wherever you go, there you are.

Bill Paige

VOLUME SIX  
NUMBER THREE  
OCTOBER 14, 1977

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TRIAD Magazine is published bi-weekly by Triad Communications, Inc., 401 W. Fullerton, Chicago, Ill. 60614. Subscriptions: \$10.00 per year. Application to mail at controlled circulation rates is pending at Chicago, Illinois. Copyright 1977 Triad Communications Inc. All rights reserved.

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# ODDS & SODS

It's official . . . the Hounds have signed with CBS Records. The band will begin work on their first album in November, with a projected release date of February 15. Besides signing a contract, the band has had a change of personnel (all in the same weekend). Gary Levin guitar, and Jon Brant, bass, both formerly with the now dissolved D'Thumbs, have joined the Hounds. The Hounds will be playing selected club dates in this area during October before beginning recording, and will be doing a U.S. tour concurrent with the release of the album. The band is managed by David Webb and Bruce Kapp of Celebration Management.

Also with Celebration Management is Whisper. The band is comprised of several veterans of the Chicago-area music scene, Frank Barbalace, guitar, Ron Anaman, bass, Pat Leonard, keyboards, Bill Williams, drums, and Dennis "Fergi" Fredrickson, vocals. The band has been together less than one year and are rapidly building a fantastic following through their club dates.

Jimmy McCullough, lead guitarist of Wings, has left the group after four years to join the re-formed Small Faces. Other members of the Small Faces include original members Ian McLagen, Kenny Jones, Steve Marriott, and Rick Willis, formerly with Frampton's Camel.

Guitarist Michael Shenker is back with UFO. The band is currently touring the west coast and some southern states, and their latest Chrysalis release, Light's Out, is firmly positioned on the Billboard charts. As for Schenker, it seems that just before UFO was to leave for their tour of the States this past summer, the guitarists had some second thoughts about subjecting himself to the rigors of the road. Without informing anyone of his intentions, he sold all of his possessions, bought a motorbike, and went on an extended trek through Europe. Schenker found his peace of mind, UFO found Schenker, and everyone is living happily ever after.

It was reported in a London newspaper that during Led Zeppelin's U.S. tour, the infamous Jimmy Page was watching a video in his hotel room when four straight lines of distortion appeared on the screen. Feeling the markings were U.F.O. (the objects, not the band) related, Page apparently packed his bags and split to Cairo for four days.

Chicago's own Joe Jammer, guitarist, has formed Nobody's Business in London with ex-Savoy Brown member Tony Stevens, Bobby Harrison, late of Snafu, a relatively obscure, but well-loved British band, and Jerry Frank, another Chicago native. Jammer has also completed his fifth album with the Olympic Runners, entitled Keep It Up. The album was recorded at Chipping-Norton Studio, with Mike Vernon producing.

Joni Mitchell's next album, due soon, is entitled Cotton Avenue with Otis and Marlena and the Dance Wiz Kids.

Announced last week was the closing of Triangle Production's Chicago office. Triangle, who promoted concerts at the Arie Crown and Auditorium theatres, will be absorbed by its New York-based mother company, Madison Square Garden Productions, and the president of Triangle, Fred Fine will remain in Chicago to act as a consultant for the company for the first year of the takeover. Fine teaches class on the business of music in general and concert promoting in particular at Columbia College and will continue to expand in this direction.

For a free dose of electronic music you may do well to checkout any number of instrument dealers who are more and more getting into the synthesizer market. The Elektrik Keyboard, part of the Just Music complex at 2215 W. 95th St. in Chicago, is sponsoring such a demonstration featuring an ARP performance quartet on a battery of fifteen guitar and keyboard synthesizers. Concerts will be held October 25 at 3:00 and at 7:00 p.m., and you can get more information by calling 881-3800.



# LA MERE VIPERE



## THE SNAKE

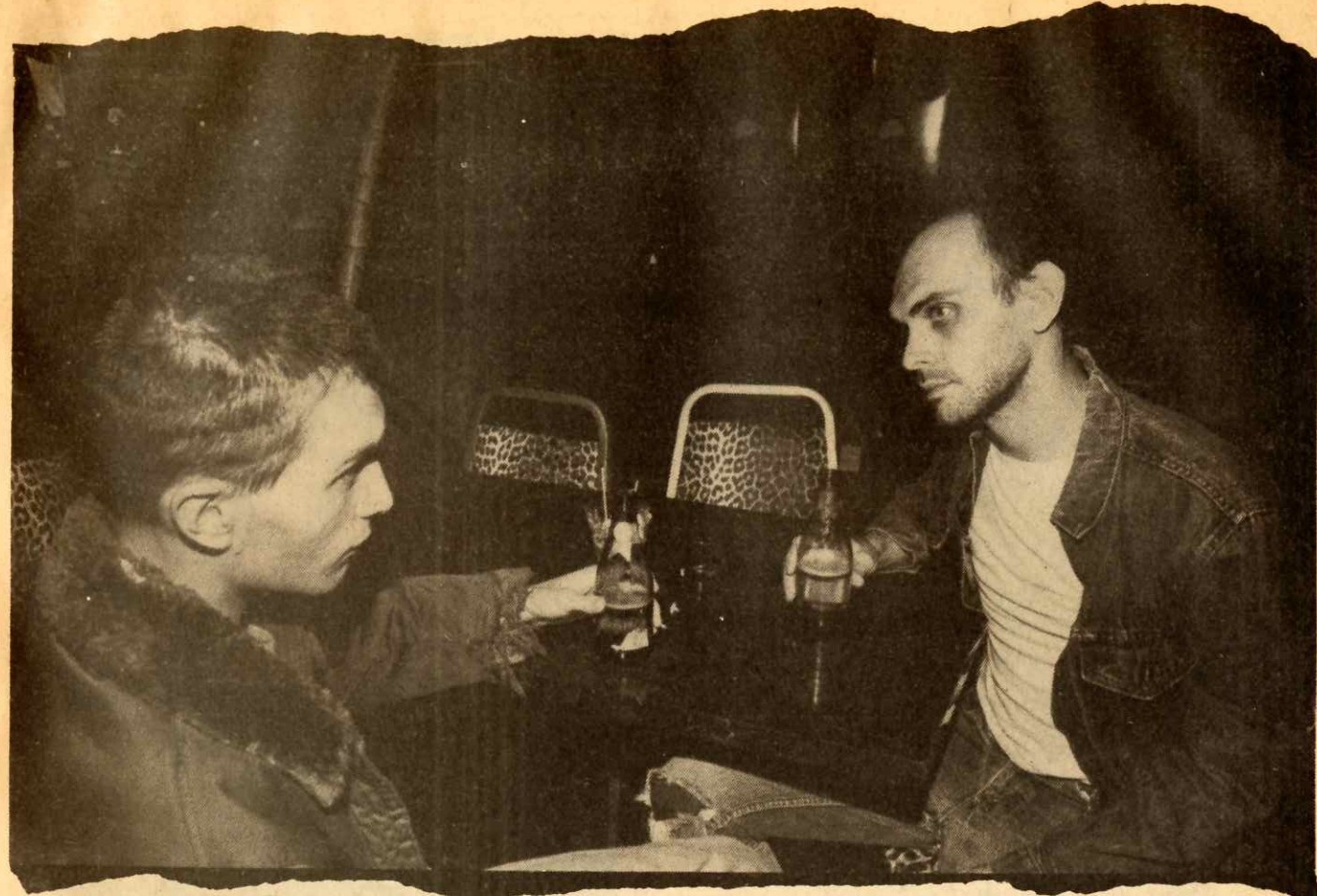
## STRIKES AGAIN

BY

B. J. GREER

COVER STORY

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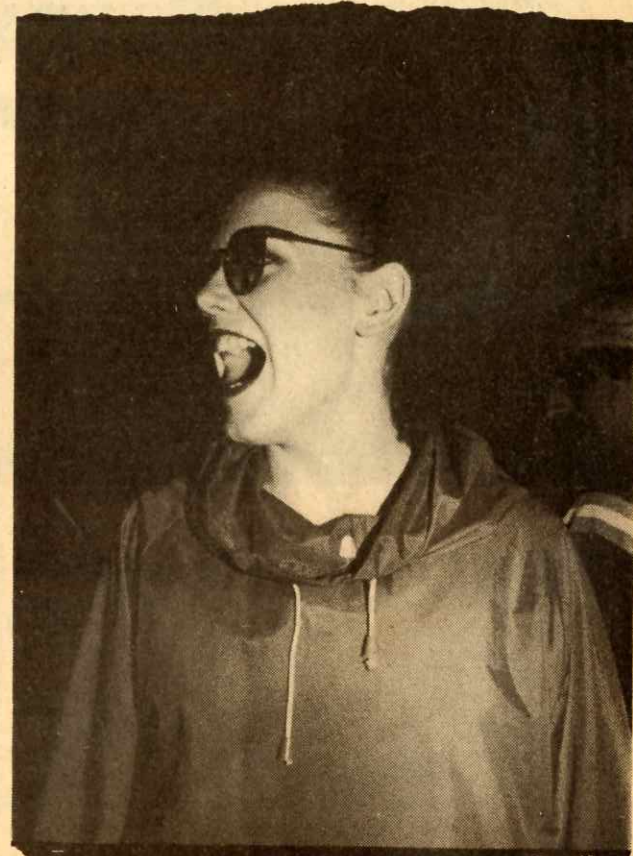
**a** petition is thrust through the crowd into your hand. It demands that WLS play the Ramones' hit "Sheena Is a Punk Rocker." Other people have a copy. Some read it. Most just sign it. And pass it on. The petition is being circulated by Mary Alice, editor of the *Gabba Gabba Gazette*. But she is more than simply an editor. She is the Louella O. Parsons of punkdom's hottest bar. She is a strawberry blonde force to be reckoned with, and you don't cross Mary Alice if you know what's good for you. So, don't even bother to read it carefully — just sign on the dotted line, pinhead.

Someone points out to her that "Sheena" is off the playlist at WLS. "We'll get it back on," she yells back as she plows through the crowd looking for other signers.

An older woman of maybe fifty with silver hair and wearing a pink pantsuit stands against the wall, watching the dance floor. She is slowly sipping a whiskey sour, her manicured nails tapping out the tune blasting from the control booth. She is checking out a much younger man with longish blonde hair in a t-shirt strategically ripped in all the right places. Suddenly, Patti Smith screams out, "Do you know how to pony?" She walks over to the young man and they start to boogie. No one notices. She fits right in. The lady is a punk, too.

A young man claws his way off the crowded dance floor and outside to the fresh air. His body is soaked in sweat. He is exhausted, but there is a smile of deep satisfaction on his face. He is definitely having a good time. He wipes his face with his t-shirt. The shirt explains the scene in glittery letters — "Anarchy At La Mere."

First off, let's define a few terms. Both Punk and New Wave have certain elements in common. They are both (to some extent)



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PHOTO/BRIAN SHANLEY

vehicles for basic, primal, get down rock and roll. They rely on simple chords, basic, driving beats, simple lyrics which are for the most part very forgettable. Songs last from 2 to 3 minutes. The music is more of an assault on your body, than your mind, the very antithesis of groups like the Moody Blues. It's Amateur Hour time for rock and roll and the music belongs to the people. Everybody can be a star.

However, Punk and New Wave are not synonymous. Punk is best exemplified by Johnny Rotten of the Sex Pistols who says, "We don't make music, we make chaos," and "Our aim is to destroy the passerby." Safety pins are not worn for effect, but out of necessity. Drugs are taboo because they take you away from more important things like rearranging the government or someone's face.

Johnny Rotten, Rat Scabies, and their followers are not a pretty bunch and they could care less who doesn't like their music. That includes every one from their mothers to the Queen. And even you, for that matter.

New Wave people on the other hand can be very pretty. From the world weary androgyny of David Bowie to the Cary Grant suave of Bryan Ferry, new wavers dress for effect and for the sake of the art which is very important to them. They appear a more amiable lot and take themselves less seriously. They do drugs but are not hung up on them. And like punks, they are violently anti-disco.

La Mere Vipere is — usually — made up of more the latter group than the former.

So how did a predominately gay disco bar become the hot-

test punk club in America? In some ways, it reads like a fairy tale.

La Mere Vipere grew out of a popular bar called the Snakepit. "We wanted to give it a name with some alliteration," explains owner Noe Boudreau, " 'Mother Snake' didn't make it, so we hit on La Mere Vipere.

The bar did well for a time with its leopard colored barstools, plastic palms, and spectacular neon designed by Chicago artist John Schacht. But business slowly began to fall off. Last year's winter hurt like it did every other bar. And somehow La Mere never really became fashionable like the Bistro and Broadway Limited.

Suddenly, bartender Mike "Sparkle" Rivers had an idea. "I suggested to the owner that we have a punk night. I liked the music right away. When Roxy Music first came out, I went right out and bought it."

"Sparkle approached me," explains Boudreau, "and suggested we try a Sunday night because Sunday nights are dead in gay bars. So we tried it one Sunday. The response was overwhelming."



PHOTO/BRIAN SHANLEY

John "Mo" Molini, who works with Sparkle at Sounds Good Records on Broadway knew the response that punk rock was generating.

"The import section in the store was really growing. Kids from all over would come in looking for the new stuff. They always wanted to know if we had any Ramones or Sex Pistols. So, we put an ad in the Reader and we told our customers about Punk Night at La Mere."

La Mere Vipere was born again on May 8, 1977, with the first Punk Night. Mo, Sparkle, Rick Faust, Taco and their friends replaced the moans of Donna Sommer with shrieks of Richard Hell. The Ritchie Family was out and the Ramones were in. And the place was packed.

In late June a "Punk-O-Rama" weekend was sponsored. On Friday night, "The Legendary Punks" movie was shown starring Patti Smith, Television, The Ramones, Mink De Ville, Blondie and others. On Saturday a punk fashion show was held. The fashions ranged from the ubiquitous shredded shirts with safety pins, to what appeared to be a kind of paratrooper outfit with several pounds of round steak strapped to it. On Sunday night a barbecue was held. Attendance for each of the nights was well over a thousand. Boudreau was convinced. La Mere Vipere was going to go punk.

And it did so with a vengeance. The entire disco inventory was put away and Boudreau began to bone up on the latest punk and new wave records. Posters of Bowie, Ferry, the Stranglers, and others were plastered over the bar. Signs reading "Respectability The Disease — Anarchy The Cure" and "Don't Try To Save Us — We Dig Bein' Mad" were hung on the second level.

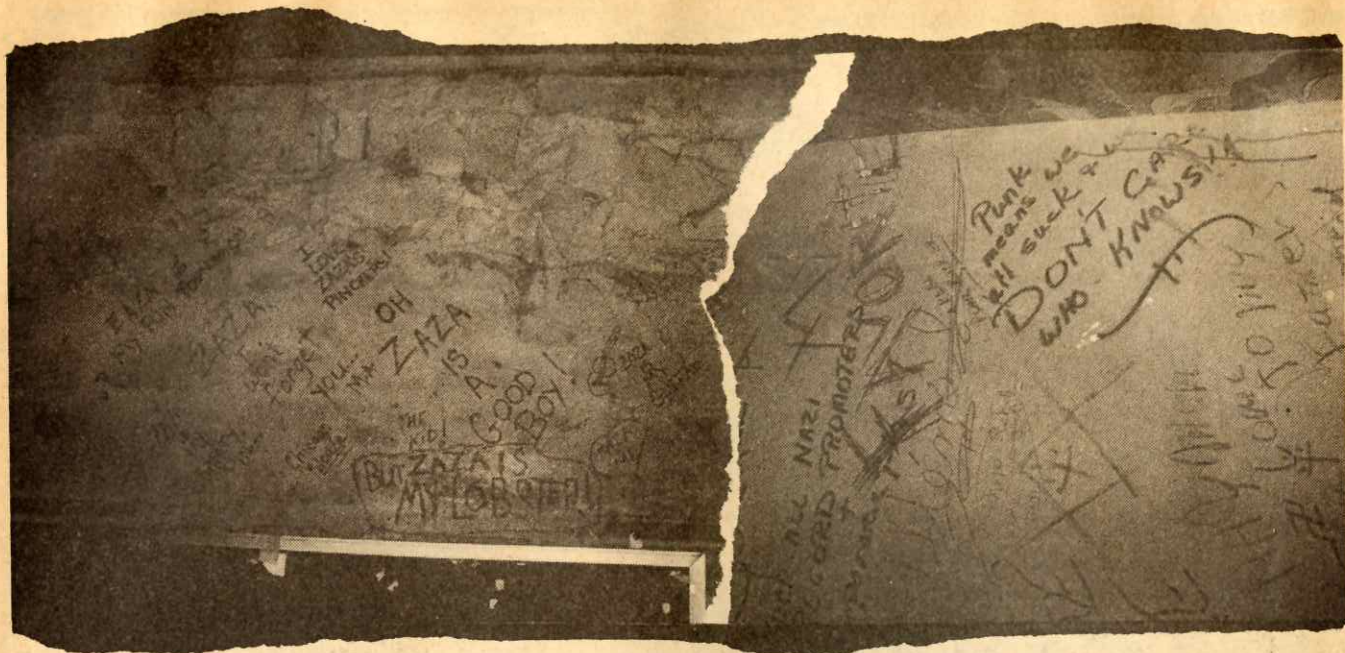
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One night after the bar had closed, it was discovered that someone had spray painted slogans all over the walls along the back stairs. The johns were loaded from ceiling to floor with graffiti. Someone had recorded in the men's john for posterity a rendezvous that one of the Ramones had had there with a female regular. The stage was set. But Noe Boudreau wasn't taking any chances. A list of rules was hung on the landing to the second floor. The last one reads; "IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE NOW CUZ CREEPS ARE NOT WELCOME AND WE MEAN IT MAN!"

**W**hich leads to the question of whether punk music inspires violence. John, who works at Sounds Good believes that the music mirrors the violence of a violent society. "Kids today are tired of being shut out," he says. "Punk addresses itself to those frustrations."

Boudreau states that "Kicking in walls and pulling out urinals is not anarchy. That's stupid." "You don't need rules to control people," claims Mo. "I can walk right through that crowd and cool things out because I know how to handle it and they know me."

Boudreau admits that there has been a little violence at La Mere, due to some mistakes made in the beginning. "Saturdays get unbearable sometimes. But we can curb that - we just send people away. You can't be rude to people either. If people come from the burbs, even if they are assholes, you have to be considerate of them."

La Mere has become a barometer of the new music. Music industry people, record labels, and rock magazines alike check it out regularly to find out what people are listening to.

"The neat thing about this bar is that it has some fringe benefits like the Art Institute people - the artsy-fartsy types," explains Sparkle.

Some of the "artsy-fartsy" types who got turned on by the scene at La Mere are Monica Lynch and Steve "Spin" Miglio. Monica and Steve are both artists and were heavily into disco. But when it began to bore them they began to search for other alternatives. They grew tired of the precision dancing that disco requires and the long, repetitious music. In addition, disco lost some of its earlier, earthy R&B roots and became purely synthetic. For them, as well as for many others, it was time for a change.

Spin says, "I used to listen to all those groups like Martha

and the Vandellas. I really liked them for their music and their visuals. Visuals are a very important part of my life."

Visuals and the primal energy of the new music are the key to why artists are interested in La Mere and why they go there. Punks, however, are not into serenity.

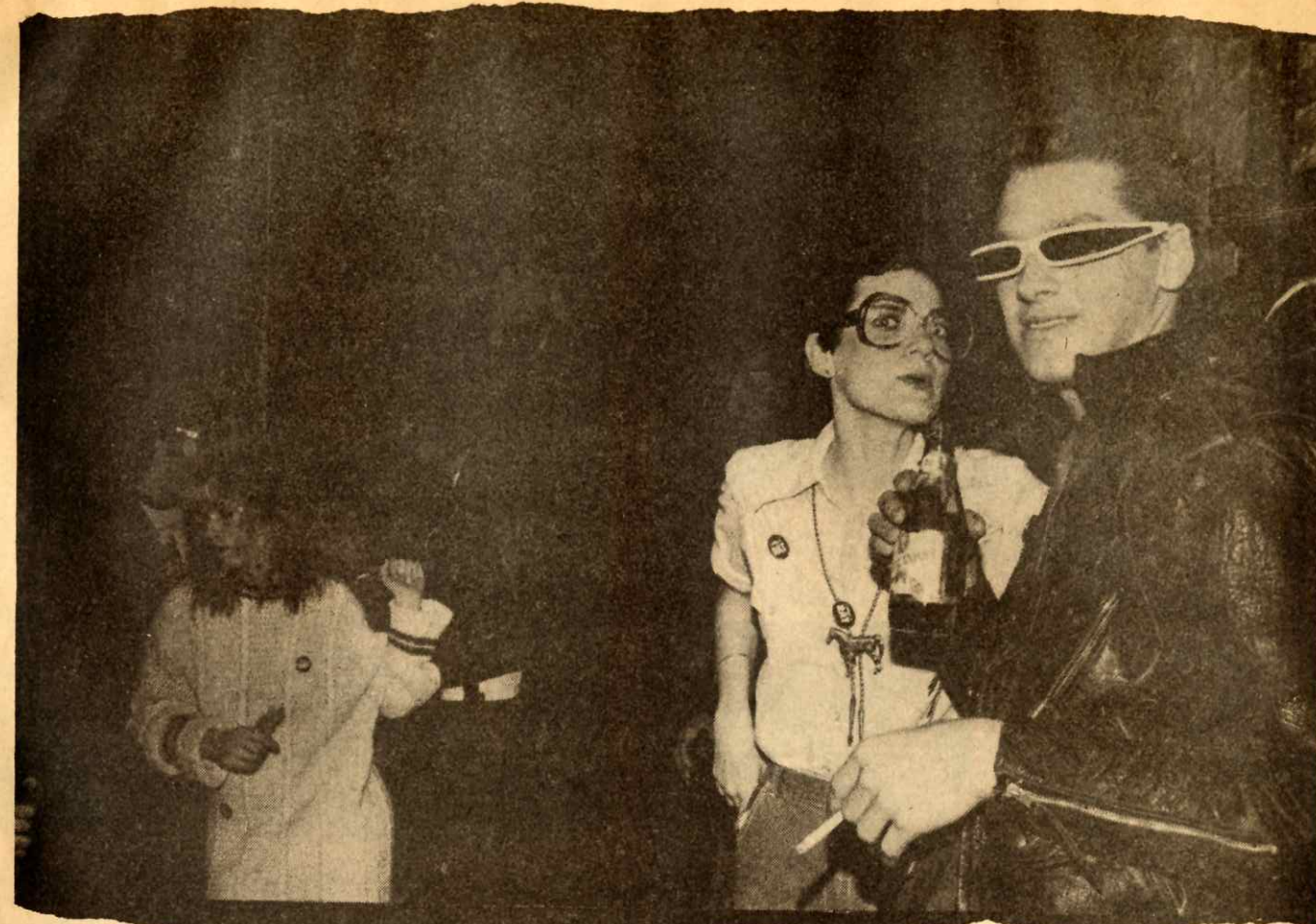
Take Spin and Monica for instance.

Monica works for a fashion designer. She is a quiet, pretty girl who dresses creatively and makes punk toys that she wears around her neck on silken cords. One toy is a grouping of multi-colored rabbit feet. Another is a clear plastic bag containing a prize from a Cracker Jack box. "The Tribune did a story on Spin and me and I had to say that some of my things are for sale. But I don't sell them. That would defeat the purpose."

Spin works as a waiter in the Cafe Metropole in the Century Shopping Plaza. A more competent and pleasant waiter you can hardly find.



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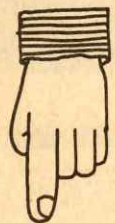
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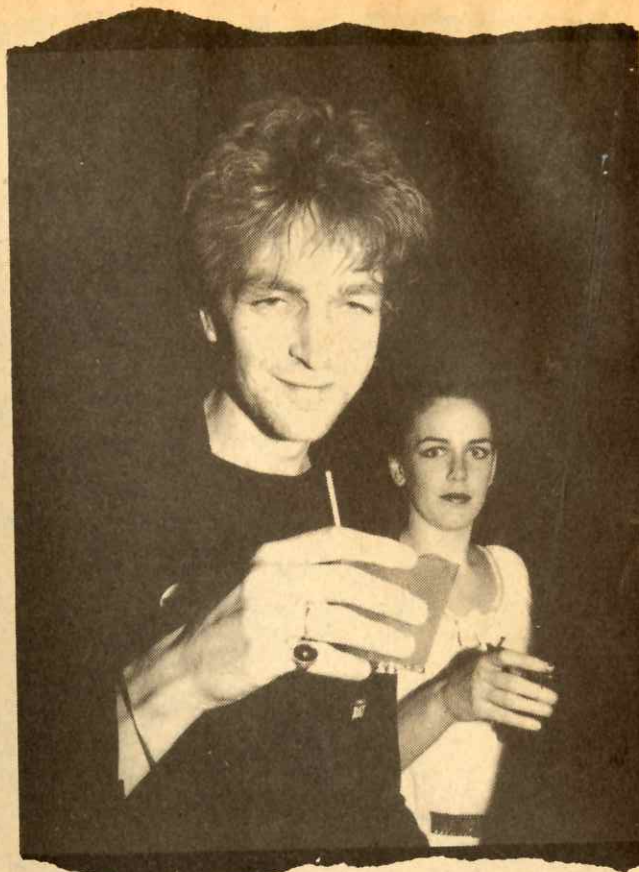
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But during their off hours and whenever they can do it, Monica and Spin are part of the B.B. Spin band, who along with Skafish are one of two bands spawned at La Mere that are really making some noise around town.

Spin and Monica are perfect examples of the punk philosophy that music belongs to the people. Neither of them have musical training but they are the lead singers of the group. "The band just approached us," Spin explains, "because they liked the way we looked and the way we danced. They asked us to be a part of the band. Getting into music for us has been real easy."

"B.B. Spin's going to make it," says Mo of Sounds Good. "They do a song called Nightlife. It has a little Latin, a little soul, the whole urban thing. They really make you lose it."

The dance floor is one of the best places to witness La Mere's complete transformation into punk. Gone are the rituals of disco dancing. They have been replaced by the "pogo" a wild dance that has everyone jumping all over the place. You can get your toes stomped on and your head knocked in on the dance floor at La Mere. That's because dancing becomes something of a body contact sport. Don't care how it looks — just do it.

La Mere is practically filled from ceiling to floor during the weekends. Many of the regulars stay way, because the tourists have started coming to gawk. "Some of the people come here from the burbs and see groups of people dancing and get uptight," explains Sparkle. "But lots of prejudices get broken down here. You don't get uptight if you see two guys dancing."

Wednesday is the best night for the regulars because the drinks are cheap. A lot of groups stop in. The Ramones are regulars when they're in town. But you won't find Chicago there. Noe Boudreau turned them away after their Soldier's Field concert because it was too crowded.

But it's not all smooth sailing at La Mere. Although it is considered the premier punk club in America, Chicago winters can be the nemesis of any bar. And La Mere has no coat room.

In addition, a few of the founding fathers feel that the younger kids are being left out of the scene because they can't legally drink at the club.

Punk belongs to the kids. Rock and roll is theirs," says John of Sounds Good, and goes on with a more technical explanation. "The music industry has become a fortified fortress. Young kids have been shut out. The basement bands have no venue. Remember in the 60's when they had teen clubs and kids could go hear teen bands making music, kids their own age? That doesn't exist anymore." Apparently, the musicians concur and are optimistic about the scene. Joey Ramone pouts, "Once you've heard punk, there's no turning back."

"I'm not sure that the people who run La Mere understand that punk is young," explains Rick Faust. "If you're really into that scene, you've got to deal with that."

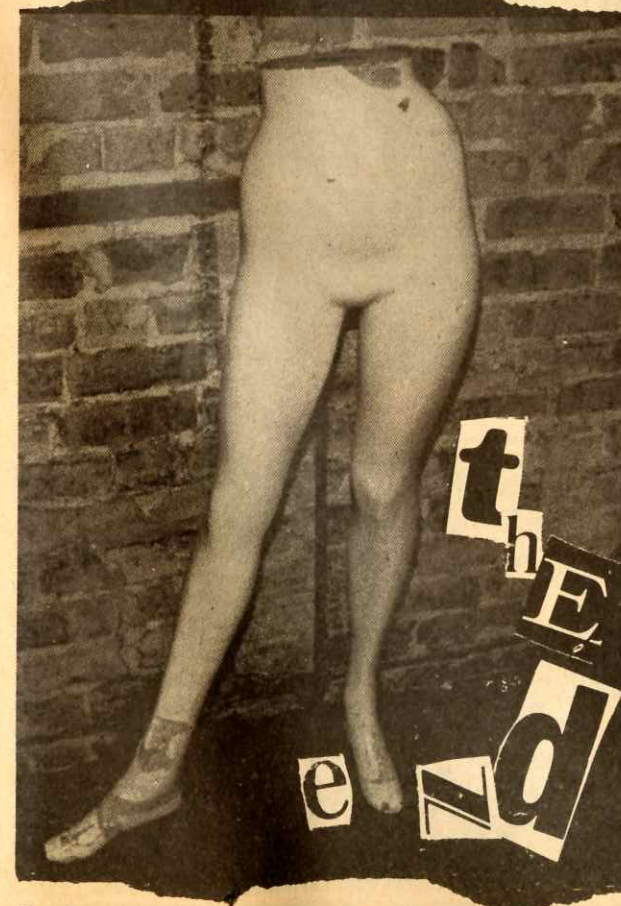
Boudreau believes, however, that keeping La Mere as a bar keeps a lot of things under control. "I don't want a meeting place. La Mere is a place to party hard and to have drinks. I can't deal with teenagers. You have to put up with stupid rules like curfew."

Mo takes a looser stance. "We're keeping an eye on things, seeing how they go. Time will tell. Kids from England, New York come to La Mere. You've got places like CBGB's in New York where you can hear bands but no place where you can dance like La Mere."

And time will indeed tell whether La Mere is just another flash in the pan and will go the way of places like the Cheetah.

And any night at La Mere is like a giant party. There are few postures and hardly any attitudes. Anyone can come as long as they're old enough. And there is a definite spirit of "anything can happen" that sends an electric charge through the place that is quite unlike any other bar.

You may think that La Mere is the ultimate in punk and new wave or just another bar cashing in on the latest trend. You may consider the clientele a part of what's happening or a bit twisted. But one thing is for sure — once you've gone, you won't forget it. And you'll probably look back. As Sparkle says, "La Mere is not a work of art. It's just a rock and roll bar."

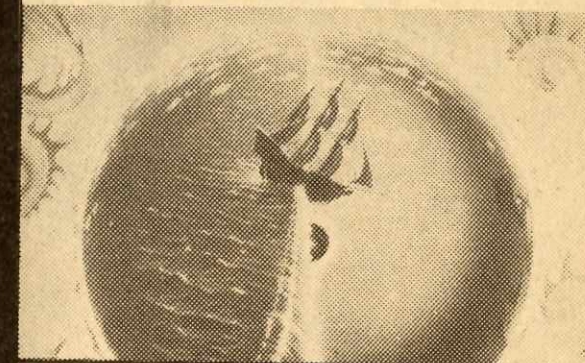


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# From the Heart Of the Midwest

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Sparks Of The Tempest/Hopelessly Human  
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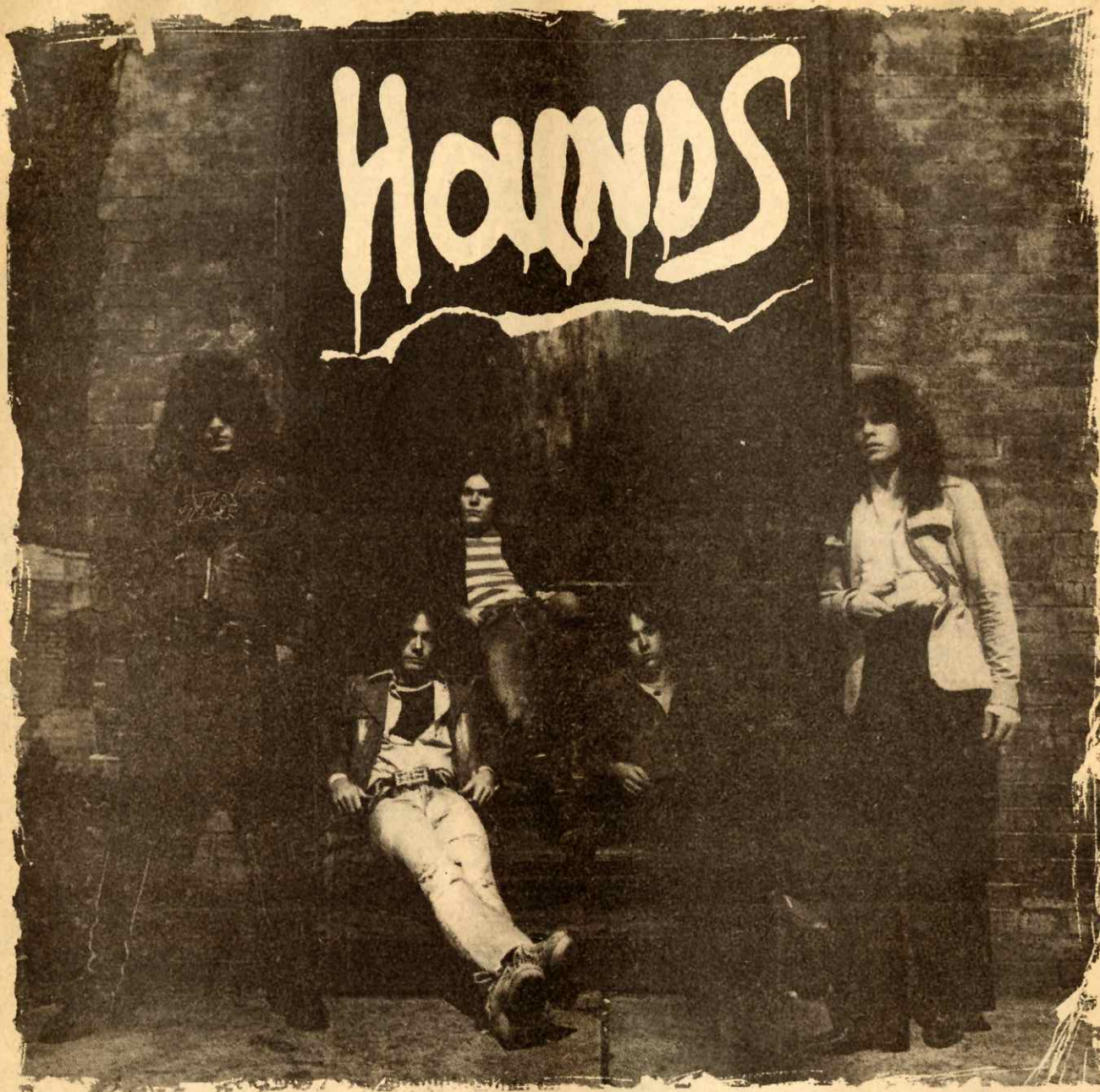
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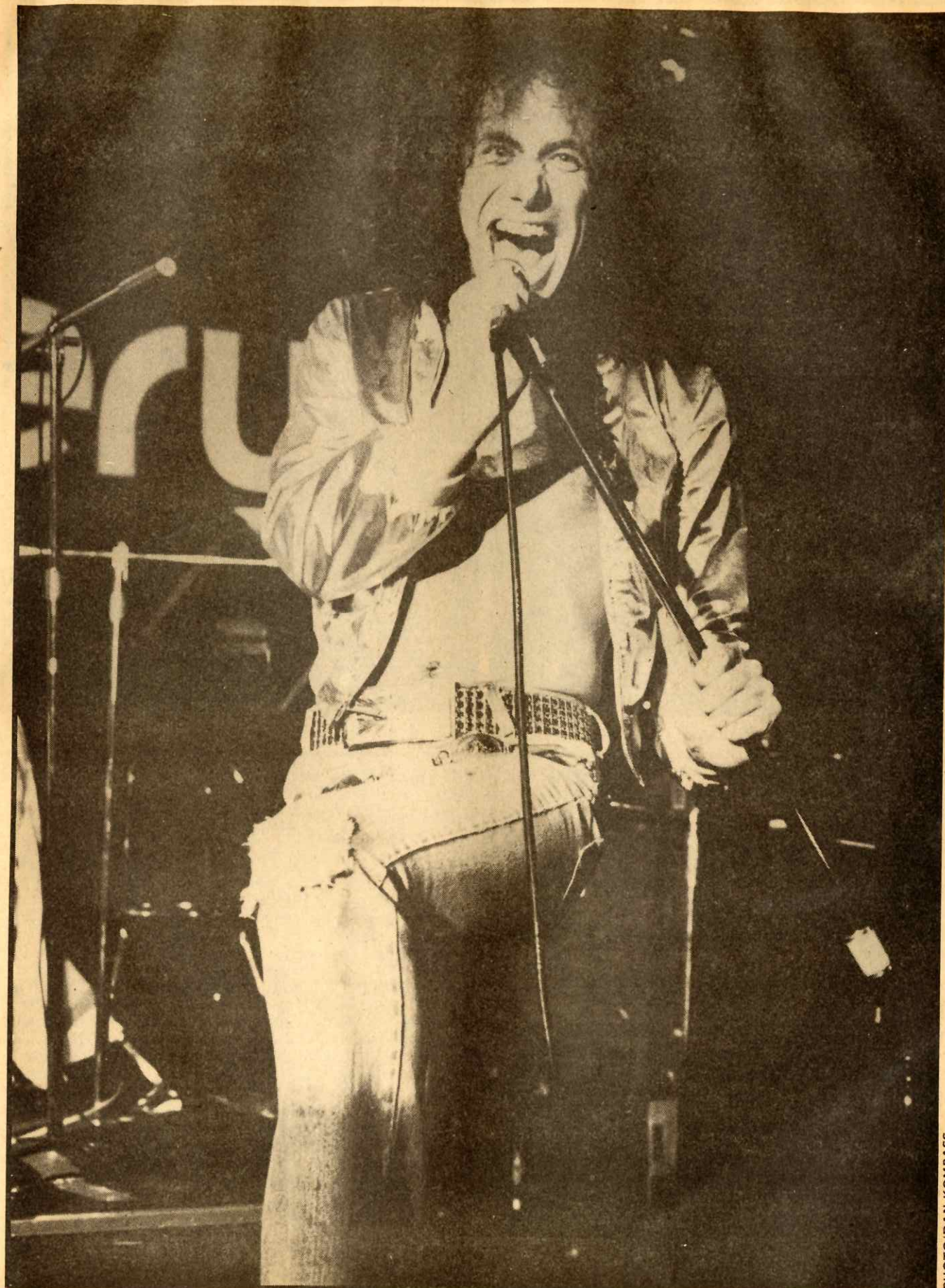




BILL SOSIN/PHOTO RESERVE

# MEANER THAN A JUNKYARD DOG

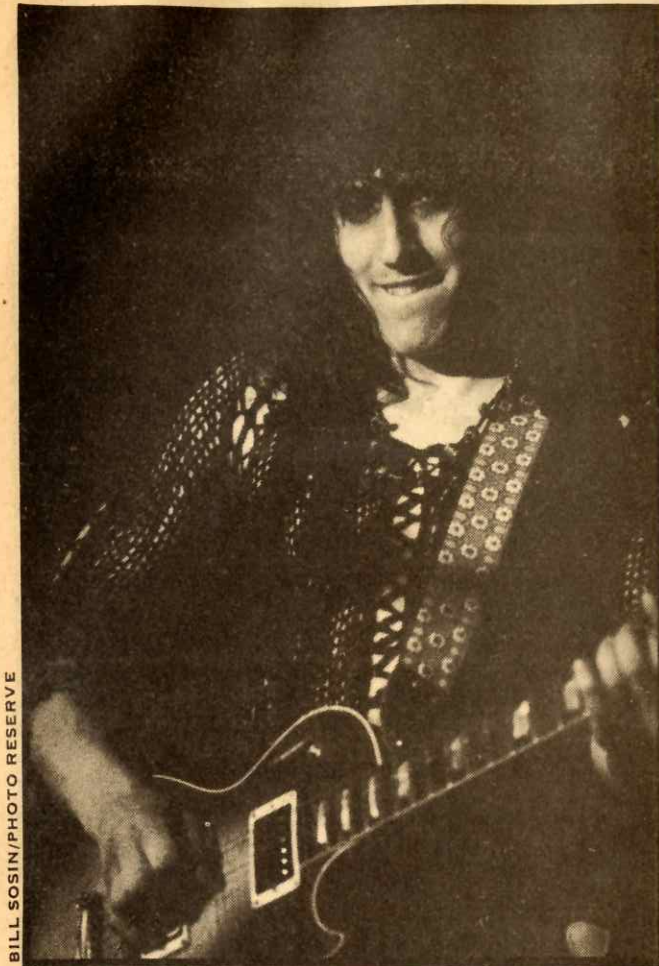
BY LORI DAÑA



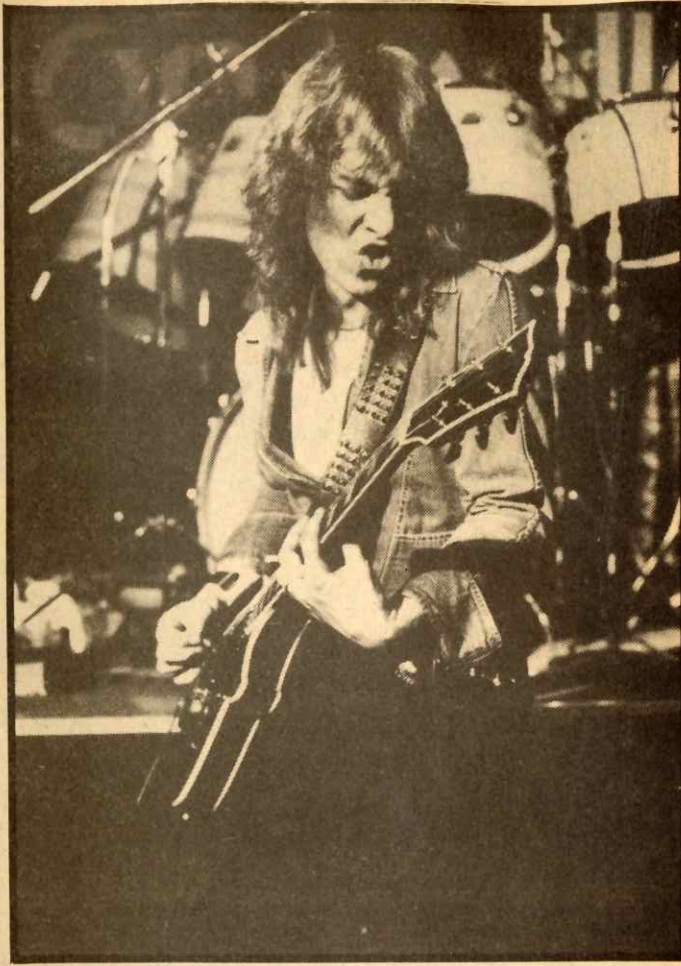
Triad

JOHN HUNTER

PHOTO/DAN KOMPASS



GARY LEVIN



JIM ORKIS

"Most of our music," says John Hunter, "is about drugs and illicit sex and violence."

Hunter is the Leader of the Pack, the head of the Hounds, number-one in Chicago's hottest bad-boy band. They recently signed with Columbia Records in what's reputedly the biggest deal ever given a previously unrecorded act.

Accordingly, they have great expectations.

"We want to be the greatest rock 'n' roll band in the world," says Hunter, with characteristic modesty. "Most of the local sound is pop-ish and we're not like that, we're different in direction."

The Hounds consider themselves Chicago's premier punk band. And though Hunter says he's a believer in the city's current blossoming rock scene, he sees his group as something apart from the general run of local bands—and, for that matter, different from the rest of the country's punks.

"You certainly can't help noticing the Ramones," he says. "They're on the back of every roll of toilet paper."

David Webb, who co-manages the Hounds with Celebration owner Bruce Kapp, likes to tell about a telegram the Hounds sent to the Ramones a while back.

"John told them they were candy-ass," says Hound Horvath with a grin. Chicago is where the real punks are." There was no response from the Big Apple; Hunter says the silence speaks for itself. He hopes for their local FM radio hit. "Another Drugland Weekend," which at one point was one of WXRT's most requested tune and has been picked up by other stations in the area as well as in Iowa and Wisconsin. With no album yet available, some program directors went so far as to add live Hounds tapes to their playlists.

When that first album does finally appear (sometime soon after the New Year hits), it'll be graced by the now-familiar Hounds logo: first emblazoned on a Chicago back alley with a spray paint can wielded by Webb himself. That crude artwork is indicative of the band's musical approach: loud and nasty.

Despite his punk posturing, Hunter

insists that Hounds are really just middle class boys. The quiet, church-filled suburb of South Holland is the home of Hounds' self-styled spokesman.

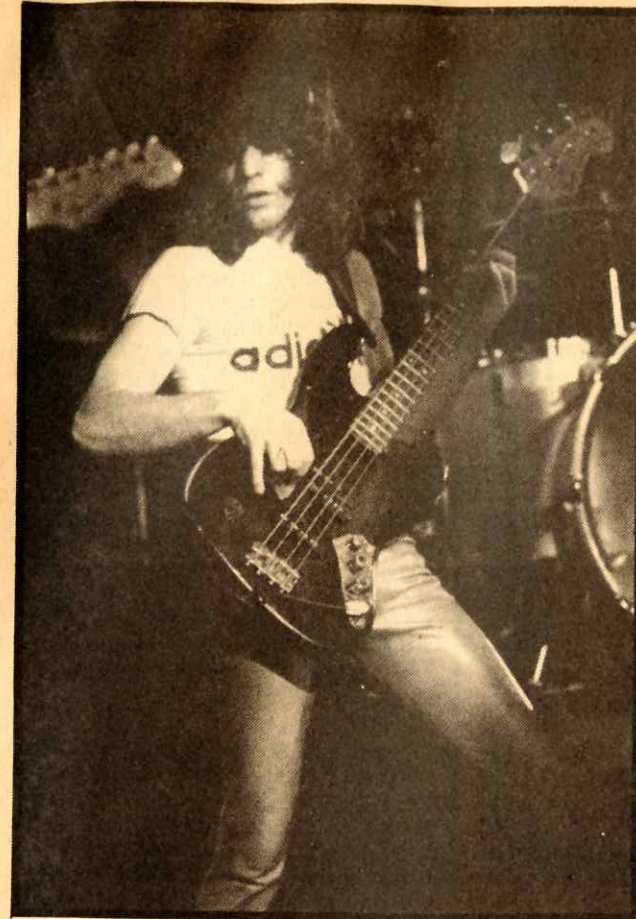
"I'm a suburban brat," John admits. And though early reports had them pegged as children of south side Chicago's industrial wasteland, that is not entirely true. Guitarist Jim Orkis was a steel mill worker for awhile, but John Hunter had never seen a mill before a recent two summer stint hauling beams. He feels that Hounds' music is more a reaction to their upbringing than a reflection of it. Rock music is the vehicle of youth. The performers may age, the music always belongs to the rebellious young.

Hunter says that with this, the members of the Hounds identify. "Chicago is classic middle America," he states. "It's in the middle of the United States and everyone holds the middle in their opinions. There's nothing middle about our music."

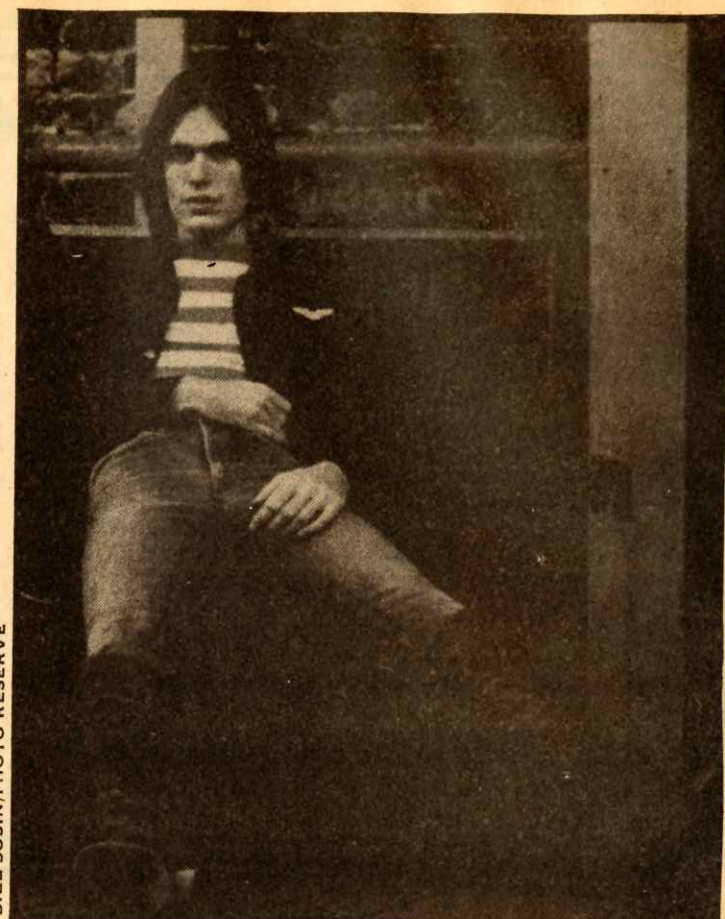
This is one fact that an audience can immediately affirm the first time they experience a live Hounds show. Because some personnel changes have taken place since the record deal was signed (Gary

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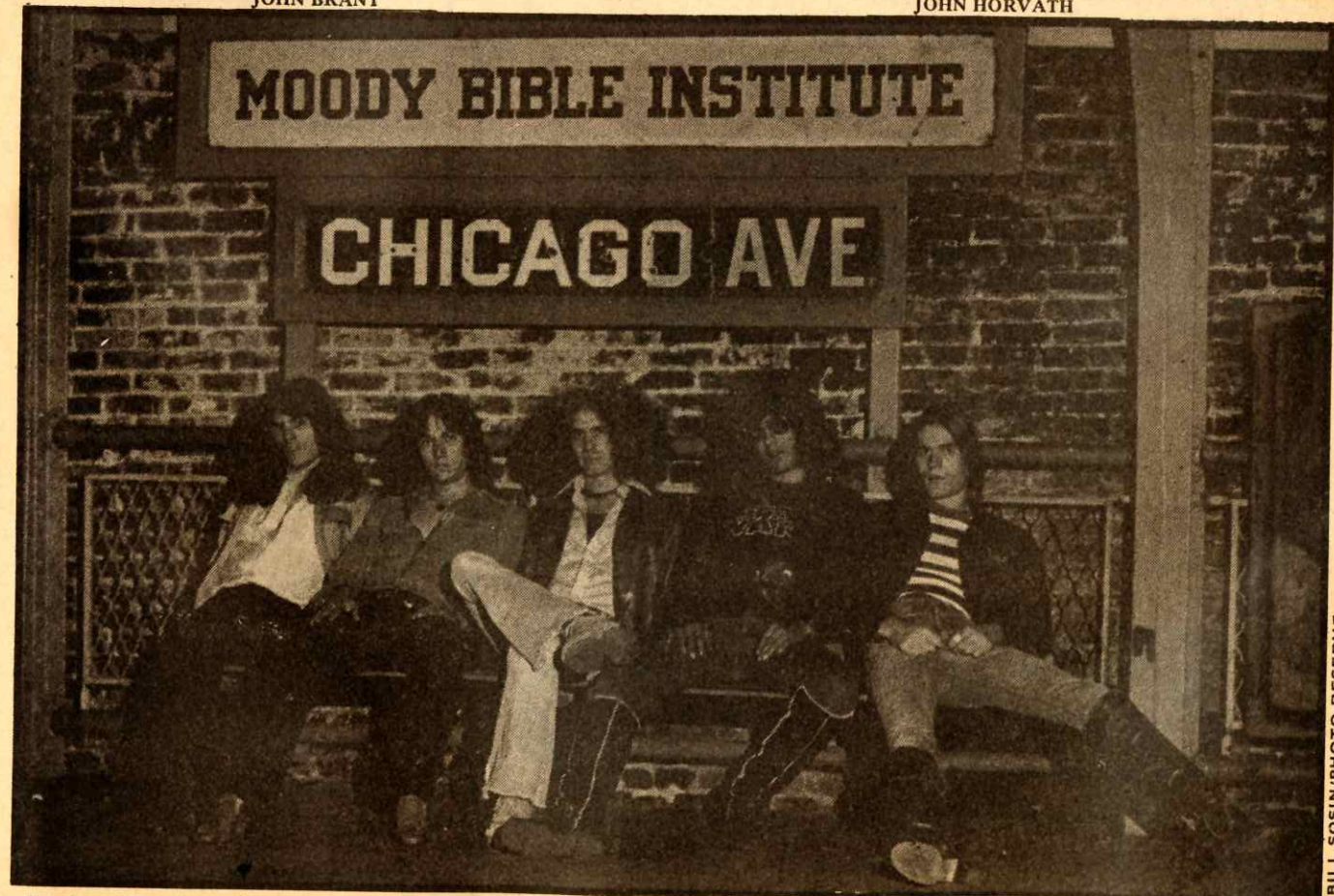
JOHN BRANT



JOHN HORVATH

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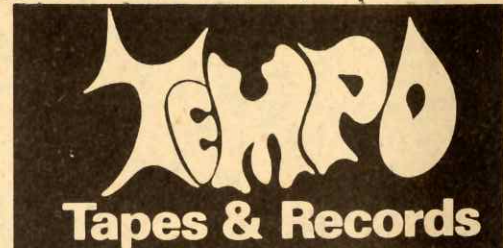
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Levin, formerly of d'Thumbs joined original members Hunter, Jim Orkis and John Horvath as a second guitarist, and his opposing Thumb John Brant replaced bassist Joe Richards) Hounds' sound has gotten even hotter.

Despite Hunter's denials, an industrial feel comes through, with pile-driving bass lines supporting (and in some cases dominating) every tune. Hunter and Orkis both admit to being heavily influenced by Mott the Hoople, but are quick to point out a generally more melodic sound which overlays the bass lines, particularly in vocal and keyboard parts. This is particularly evident in the chorus of "Another Drugland Weekend."

Putting comparisons aside, it's easy to see Hounds' music as a basic study in industrial rock versus punk-rock styles. That is, industrial sound as a musical concept contrasting with music of an emotional reaction. The two work well together; tight, structured instrumentals and freight train rhythms backing lyrics about drugs, gang rivalries, teenage sex and youth's predictable rebellion against society.

Though they have it in them to go overboard on the volume during their live show (thus obliterating much of the subtlety and musical interplay present in their music), a Hounds album carefully arranged and produced should be enormously popular. The band feels that some of their numbers don't yet live up to their full potential in a live performance, but they don't want the album to be pretentious.

"Deficiencies the music are going to be rectified," says Jim Orkis. "A lot of it has to do with fullness of sound." The addition of the two Thumbs does much to fill out most of the songs, and classic rock poseur Levin will augment Hunter's secure visual appeal.

John Hunter maintains that Hounds will try to keep some of the coarseness of their sound on the album. "No choir boy vocals," says John. "We want a dynamite sounding album but we want to sound better live than we do on record."

Unlike the other Chicago bands that have recently signed label deals, Hounds will be recording the majority of their album in the Windy City, rather than in New York or L.A. Both the band and Celebration management are extremely optimistic about the happening Chicago rock scene.

With at least this dedication they've shown that they are in touch with their roots. Though fame and fortune seem imminent, they will remain the band for the average man. "Rock 'n' roll belongs to the kids and it always will," says Hunter. "We don't intend to try and change that."

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## STEELY DAN

# REELIN' IN THE EARS

I know this super highway  
This bright familiar sun  
I guess that I'm the lucky one  
Set on this peaceful shore  
You think you've heard  
this one before

There are plenty of things you can learn about Steely Dan just by listening to their records, things that are reliable, familiar, unchanging from one album to the next.

Donald Fagen's singing, of course. He has the kind of voice that melts into itself in studio-induced harmony like a narcissistic lover; a soothing voice, despite its characteristic rough edges. And Walter Becker's impeccable, understated guitar licks. And, perhaps most important, their songs: improbable lyrics, tasteful pop melodies, a curiously affecting moodiness.

Fagen and Becker are Steely Dan — essentially a songwriting duo who periodically hire the best studio men they can find and turn out those carefully crafted records to the virtually unanimous adulation of critics and an ever-growing personal following.

So from the records — including the new collection, *AJA* — you can learn that Steely Dan write intriguing songs, possess one beautiful voice and one artistic set of hands on the fretboard. You can in other words, discover them musically, without ever approaching any kind of feeling for what kind of people they are.

And for years, ever since they dismantled the original Steely Dan's sideman superstructure in 1973, that's the way Fagen and Becker have kept it. They

generally shied away from interviewers and managed to alienate those who did get close to them. They were willing to leave journalists and fans alike with the always dissatisfying edict that their music said all there was to say about them and Steely Dan.

So even more than the potent jazz underpinning that sets *AJA* apart from all previous Steely Dan releases, the announcement that Fagen and Becker were now prepared to meet with a few representatives of the rock press — and that they were willing to be nice about it — made the release of the new record a real turning-point in their relationship with their fans.

TRIAD Executive Editor Bruce Meyer talked with Fagen and Becker recently in Becker's suite at the opulent Bel-Air Hotel in Beverly Hills. He came away with the feeling that the interviewees have that same sense of a changing relationship with the public — and with their own art. They seem more at ease than their reputation suggested, comfortable with their music and with their place in the business that goes with it.

But if, as "Home At Last" suggests in *AJA*, Fagen and Becker have found their "peaceful shore," they have no intention of altering the pattern established by six albums — a freewheeling spirit lyrically, a progressive jazz-pop orientation melodically and a solid anchor of mellow vocals and all-round good taste.

She serves the smooth retsina  
She keeps me safe and warm  
It's just the calm before  
the storm

Call in my reservation  
So long hey thanks my friend  
I guess I'll try my luck again  
— "Home At Last"

by Walter Becker and Donald Fagen,  
©ABC/Dunhill Music, Inc. (BMI)

Steely Dan may be home now, at last. But enjoy it while you can — and don't expect them to hang around for long.

**TRIAD:** *AJA* has a lot of jazz in it. Do you think it'll pick up a new audience for you, less rock, more sophisticated, mellower?

**Becker:** That could be — do we have a mellow and sophisticated audience now?

**Fagen:** I don't know — I haven't checked the demographics recently.

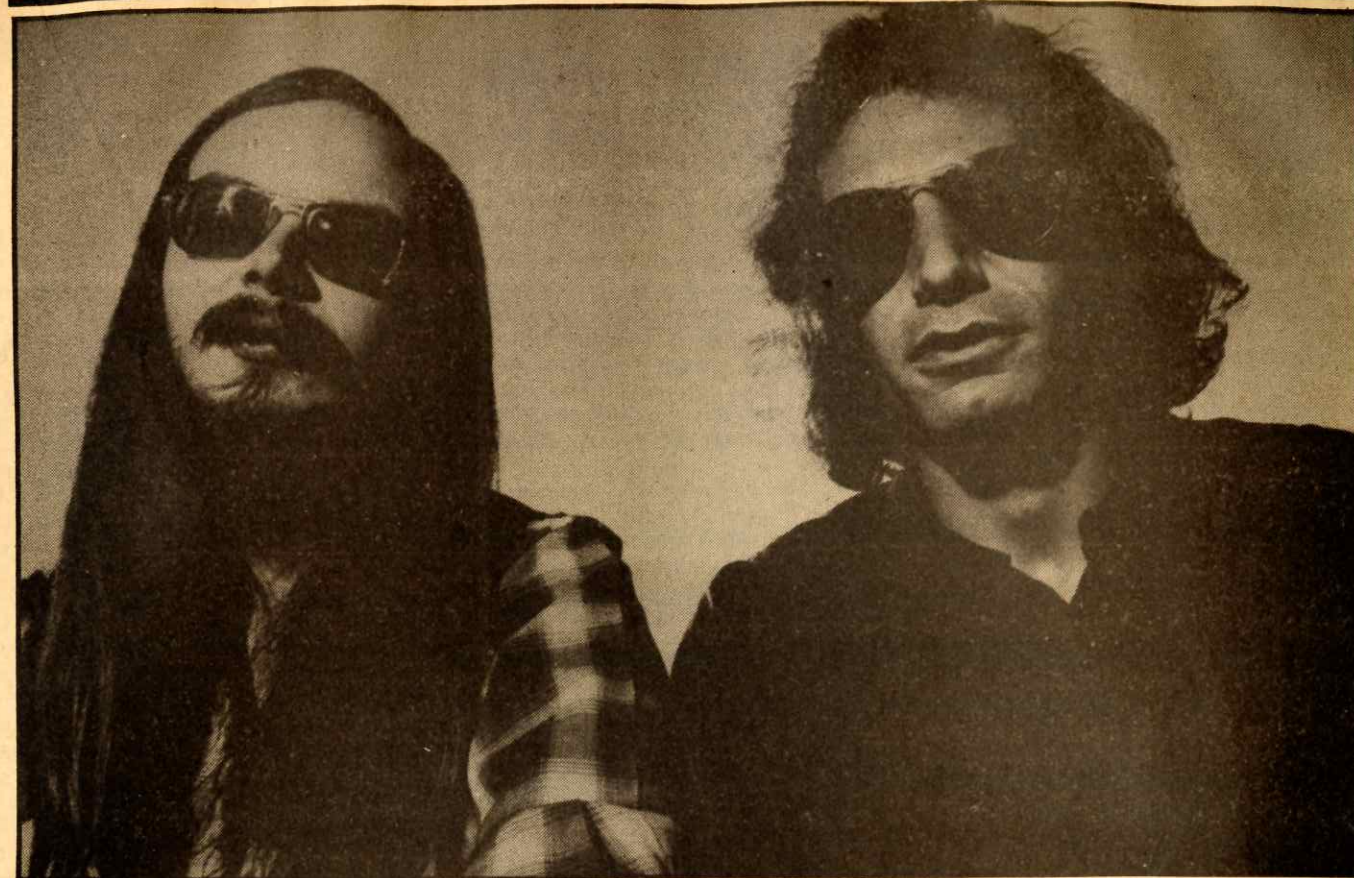
**T:** Do you pay much attention to the kind of audience you get?

**B:** We don't know. We don't tour, so it's hard to know.

**T:** Are you likely to change that policy — go on tour?

**B:** We're not real likely to do that; we had planned to do it, but at this point I'm not sure what we're going to do. The album was originally going to be released considerably sooner and when we finally did finish with it, the record company wanted to hold it for a while. So the tour that we had planned was completely inappropriate, because it was going to happen before the record came out. And . . . we decided we'd put that on the back burner for the time being.

**T:** Do you now have a band that



you're prepared to go out with when — if — you decide to tour?

**F:** Well, we had a couple of rehearsals with a band, yeah. But right now, they've returned to their other responsibilities. But we could probably — we sort of have them on call, if we need them.

**T:** Who's included in that group?

**F:** The band we were rehearsing with was Walter and myself, Paul Griffin (keyboards), Victor Feldman (drums/percussion), Danny Dias (Steely Dan's original lead guitarist) — and we never got around to full rehearsals, but the rest of the band would have been just as good, plus we were thinking about some singers. . .

**B:** It would have been a great band.

**T:** Yeah. With a group like that, all it takes is a little rehearsal and you'd have something hot. . .

**B:** Well, more than you think. To get it to gel — a band playing on stage needs a certain amount of time to, to become a band. Instead of just a bunch of very good players.

**T:** You two are a couple of pretty elusive characters, as far as the public goes.

**F:** Illusive or elusive? [with a smile]

**T:** Elusive. It's difficult for people to understand, really, who you are. How do you guys write? Do you work together all the time, or . . .

**B:** We do a lot of it together. Donald will have little fragments of things, a chorus, and we'll have a verse of something we wrote six months ago, y'know. . .

**F:** Six years ago. . .

**B:** . . . six years ago, and we figure how we can jam this guy onto the beginning of this, and then all we have to do is figure out how this will work with that and then we can write a song. Or, well, we'll have entire new songs. I mean, we do a lot of recycling of songs.

**T:** That's a pretty common thing — writers who come up with just a part of an idea for a song, stick that scrap in the back of their minds and let it go for years before doing anything with it. . .

**B:** Well, if you have something you like and it sticks in your mind and you remember it that many years later, chances are there was something to it. And since we write all the songs for all the albums, it takes a certain amount of time and we always reach the stage where we're thinking, "Gee, what do we have left over from, ah, the Civil War" or something like that.

**T:** It seems like most songs are built up out of little bits and pieces, rather than just written out in linear or poetic fashion. . .

**F:** Certain pieces of music are y'know, modular. You can switch A sections and B-sections to certain songs

— you just sometimes change the feel a little bit and make something out of it. That's what we mean by recycling music.

**T:** That sort of pop music, in the American traditional sense, has evolved, a verse-phrase sort of thing that can be rearranged like that.

**F:** Yeah — we're great proponents of that sort of thing.

**B:** Well, in that we use the pop song form. . .

**T:** Um-hmm — and yet your music is much more sophisticated than what most people associate with the term "pop."

**B:** Yeah. Pop means Englebert Humperdinck or Petula Clark.

**F:** We're talking here about the 30's and 40's pop form.

**T:** The thing, the verse-verse-chorus-verse thing, that came after ragtime, somewhere along in there, and has been with us since. . .

**B:** Right. That's what we're in favor of.

**T:** Reading the lyric sheet with *AJA*, it's surprising how much your songs look and feel like straightforward poetry, rather than that kind of pop song. . .

**B:** [grin] Hey, we oughtta read that.

**F:** Yeah. I haven't read a good poem since I was in college. Really, it's just an accident. Some songs will come across like that.

B: Yeah, it wasn't our intention to write poetry.

F: Although we do arrange the printed sheets ourselves so that we can put the words in some sort of attractive formation and that might help. We just write them in usual song-lyric form, but sometimes we change them for purposes of the sleeve.

T: There's a couple of songs where there are only a couple of words on a line...

B: It does look better that way.

F: Why have something look unattractive when it can be attractive?

T: That's the kind of viewpoint on marketing that a lot of bands don't reach until later in their career.

B: This is later in our career.

F: I don't know that I was thinking of marketing.

T: When you go out of your way to present something in an attractive manner, it comes down to marketing.

F: Or esthetics.

T: Okay.

B: That's the old word for marketing [general laugh].

F: It's really true. After the war, it'll be back to esthetics.

B: [to Fagen] After the war? You know something?

F: Well, you notice there's a lot of war nostalgia lately, programs on television showing how great it was during World War II and how much fun everybody had. I think everybody's getting restless, don't you?

B: What shows have you been watching? But that's been going on all along, hasn't it?

F: Yeah, well, books on Hitler and so forth. But this stuff is about how much fun it was — the excitement.

T: Yeah, there's been a resurgence of war movies, really mammoth epic stuff like *A Bridge Too Far*.

F: Yeah. And *The Eagle Has Landed* and all that.

B: Well, I'm glad we're past the age.

F: Yeah — past the age of consent. We're the age of dissent.

T: Now you're old enough to vote to send somebody else off.

B: Vote?

T: Whatever. Acquiesce.

B: It's true.

T: Getting back to the matter at hand, whatever it was, on the new record Tom Scott is given credit for the horn arrangements, which are probably the most striking change from the *Royal Scam* and most of your other records, in terms of being straight-ahead jazz charts. How much input did you guys have in that area?

F: We had a lot. We went over the tunes very carefully with him, told him what we want. Generally his voicings follow the piano voicings and so on. He does have a very fine working knowledge of how to do the proper voice at the right time.

"We're not real likely to tour..."

We had planned to do it, but at this point I'm not sure what we're going to do."

B: We've used horn players and stuff in the past and I'd say he contributed a lot more than any of them. Usually we've specified almost every detail. In Tom's case, we'd give him an idea of what he definitely should do and what he definitely shouldn't do, but that would leave a lot...

F: We felt we were a little more secure giving him that leeway. He's more responsive to what we were doing.

B: He understands, if there's any jazz flavor to a chart, he's got the background...

F: To build on it.

B: Yeah. He knows what you're talking about. You can refer back to some record you had when you were 11 years old and he knows it. He knows the records.

T: And can tell you who played on it, too.

B: Yeah. Or we could argue about who played on it.

T: Do you feel yourselves moving into the fusion jazz area, out of pop? AJA certainly takes a big step that way.

B: I don't think we were thinking of that when we put this album together, although it may have come out that way, because I've noticed that that's what everybody has to say about it. If there is a fusion, it's not like we're taking some jazz things here and some rock things and just stirring it together — and I think that's how it's done, a lot of times. But we may have come up with such an album naturally.

F: We don't really have to cross over, because we were sort of there already. Not stone jazz musicians, so we didn't have to go anywhere to find rock 'n' roll, and at the same time, we were never really rock 'n' rollers. It's always been heard in our records. I think if you look back at some of our earlier albums, you'll find things that are as jazz influenced — maybe not as successful.

T: It's not so much that the idea wasn't there before. It's more in quantitative terms that AJA is more a jazz album.

B: Like a lot more saxophones and things.

F: Yeah, that's true.

B: There are some stretched out pieces, y'know. Which is something we really hadn't attempted before.

T: Why don't you perform live? Don't you like it?

B: We're in the studio most of the time — and when we're not in the studio we're writing. We don't have the band — it used to be, we had the core of a band; even though we'd go out with eight guys, we had a core of five who knew all the tunes and the arrangements and stuff. When we started to work on it, this time, we realized that you don't make a band just by picking up musicians, although we do that in the studio and it works. There's got to be a different kind of musical communication that goes on. So it takes a little longer to make a band. And I think that's one thing that's put us off, 'cause we've never really felt like we had the time when we could stop recording, stop that process, long enough to put together a band. Over the last couple of years, anyway.

F: The thing is, if we're gonna have it — a band — we're gonna have to start working with musicians on a sort of informal basis, to sort of work up to where we were the last time we had a band, before we can even think about putting it on the road.

T: Would that mean working around here [L.A.] — working some clubs?

F: Well, first we'd probably just rehearse in a studio or somebody's house or something.

T: To return to the original question, do you enjoy performing live?

B: I enjoyed the last tour that we did, because I felt that I enjoyed the band. And it was the first time I felt that way, first time I felt it was an adequate band to present the music that we had in mind to present. There'd been a lot of shows that we'd done before that where I felt it was the personnel that was just not put together properly. And there were other compromises involved. When it was put together properly. And there were other compromises involved. When it was going good, I enjoyed it a lot.

T: Those who saw the Steely Dan band in those days — even before that last tour — said it was terrific.

B: Well, that's probably something that an artist always does, having second thoughts about the way things are going. And maybe I'm exaggerating the case, but it seemed at the time that — wow, that last band we had together was really so much better sounding to me and I knew that was what we had in mind all along. It was really enjoyable then.

T: All right, given that enjoyment of that band, the next question is obvious: why did you break it up?

B: Well, as I recall at the time, we had a couple of people in the band who wanted us to be on the road, oh, about half the time. And it was impossible for us to be on the road half the time and still be making records — there just wasn't enough time.

"Certain pieces of music are modular. You can switch A sections and B sections to certain songs just to change the feel a little bit and make something out of it. That's what we mean by recycling music."

F: You can't maintain the sort of quality that we have to put in every track, and still tour at the same time.

B: Also, these people weren't making any money and they were working with other bands...

F: Yeah, we had a lot of financial trouble and, well, Jeff Baxter (now with the Doobie Bros.) in particular, he was having to sit out half the year for us while we were writing and he'd go out and play with the Doobies and making a fortune with them.

B: Yeah, he was making 10 times with them what he would make with us.

F: It was a ridiculous situation. So it was a practical decision — and a musical decision. That would be a secondary reason. Because we had quite a variety of material and we thought that if we used a variety of musicians we'd get better results.

B: And that did create some tension in the original working unit.

F: If we wanted a particular guitar player, specializing in something other than what Jeffrey specializes in, he'd be — well, slightly offended.

T: Personal tensions in the band...

F: Yeah — actually, he was very nice about it, in general, but the whole thing was just all these problems combined. And made us realize that we should break up the group.

T: The music industry ordinarily is set up to work with and for groups that make themselves seen by the public. But you've done no touring and your albums are pretty well spaced, yet you've continued to build your popularity. Do you see this as being in conflict with the common perception of the way the music business works?

B: Yes. In fact, we're constantly reminded of the fact that we're — well, when we started, after we did the last series of tours, time went by and another album went out and we said we're just going to work on another album. And people began to mention to us that we weren't going to be getting away with this for very long and how we'd better go on the road, and wouldn't it be a good idea if we just did a few dates and things like that.

F: These people assured us of our extinction if we didn't perform. But it hasn't happened.

T: It's writ in the commandments, chisled into stone — thou shalt perform thy music for the fans.

B: That's right.

F: We've come to ignore that, and just try to make the best records we could. Because that's what we really like to do.

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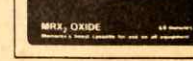
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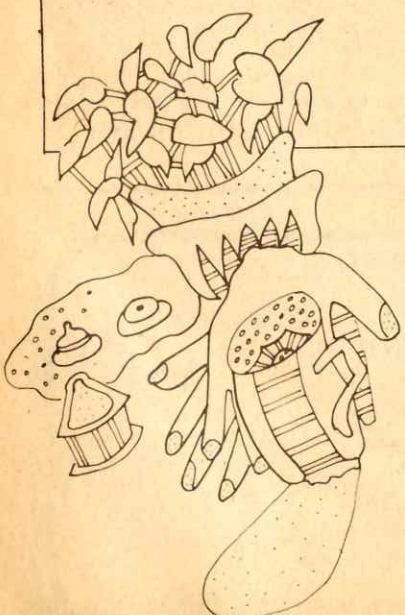
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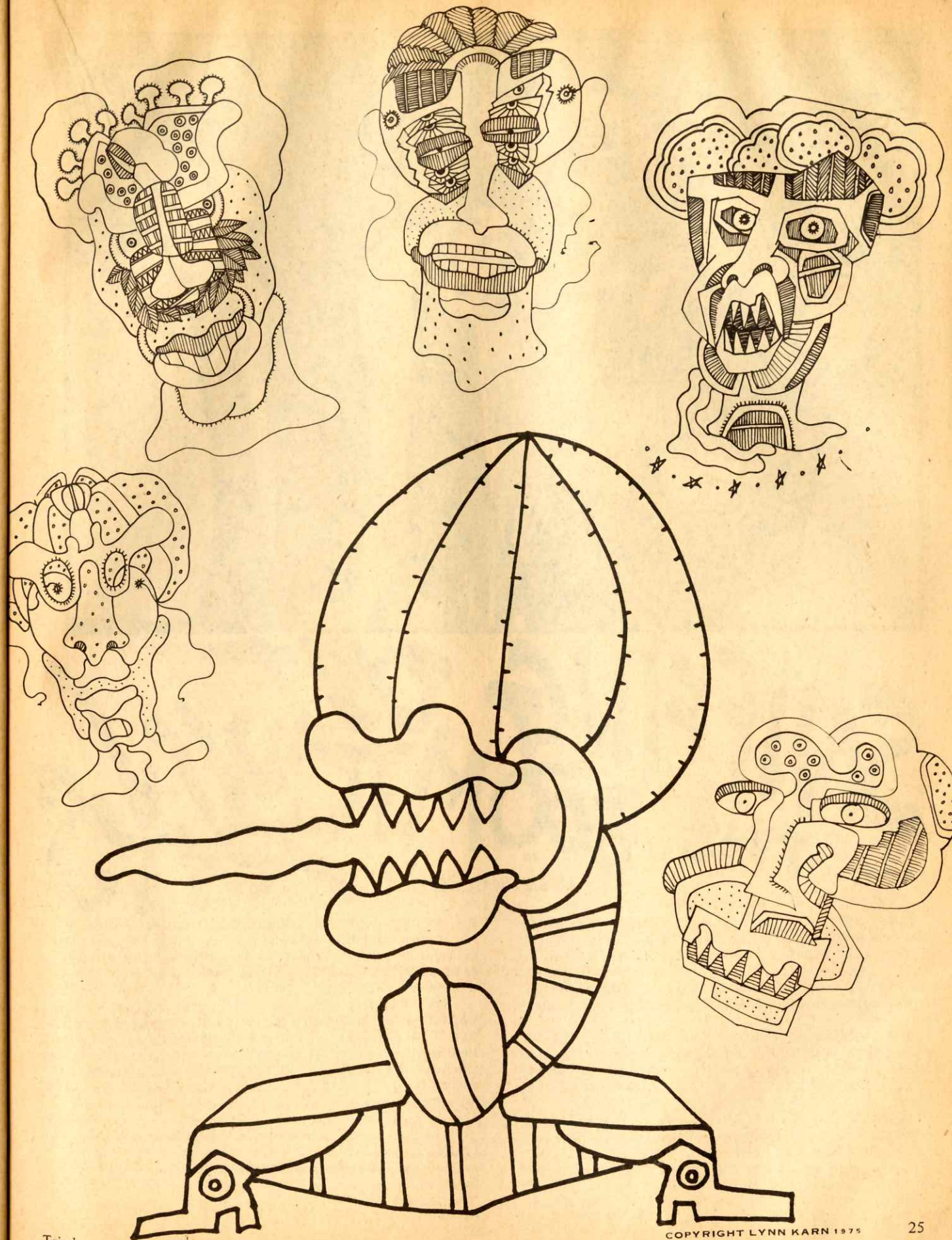
**gods in search of a myth**  
 drawings by john schacht

contained in the center of every being is the primal self, the life force of the individual and the potential vehicle for communicating with the universal consciousness of all living things. even though people become confused with the material world the primal self remains unchanged. in these drawings john schacht uses universal archetypal symbols as a point of reference. in order to communicate with the essence these forms symbolize, you are asked to participate and complete these drawings by coloring the forms. instead of being the work of one person or two people, these pages will become the work of one person who is all people.

lynn karn

john schacht is a member of the faculty at columbia college. his abstract coloring book may be obtained through nancy lurie galleries, chicago.

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# SNIFFING OUT THE BOOMTOWN RATS

BY MARK GUNCHEON

Irish punk rock????!! C'mon now, enough is enough. The New York new wave is fine, and the London ladies with their legendary punk friends are still tolerable, but now we have to deal with punk (sham) rock? Better believe it, man, 'cause the Boomtown Rats are here. And the most vocal transatlantic philosphers this side of the Stranglers would like to bend your ear.

It's late afternoon in the offices of Mercury Records and Bob Geldof, lead singer and writer for one of the hottest new wave rock bands is in town to talk. He does it very well. Twenty-five minutes into the interview we've barely gotten past first base.

Geldof rambles from ideas to ideologies, from feelings to frustrations. He's angry. He's upset. The head Rat knows what he wants from his music and he's anxious to get it.

"Everyone is in a rock band for three major reasons: to get rich, to get famous, and to get laid." Such straightforward analysis fails to be shocking in this Year of the Punk. "A lot of them will deny that, but if the record advances and royalties don't

start coming in then they'll be kicking shit with their managers. I'm in it for *those* three reasons. I think you have to have a very deficient psychological makeup to want those things as badly as I do. But there are a lot of rock and roll bands around that want them just the same."

It's a rock and roller's life — the lure of fast cars, loose women, and divine opulence is too great for any opportunist to turn up his nose. The star system has been analyzed until its reasons for being and effects are part of a greater science. The spontaneity of the British invasion and even American rockabilly is, and has been missing from these shores for quite some time. The Rats would like to see that change, and make money — lots of it — at the same time.

"I wanna be rich because it gives me options, man. I'm poor. I can't change that. But if I'm rich I have the option to be rich or poor. At least I'll have a choice. *You* have *your* price. I don't know what it is, but you *do* have a price.

"For example, if I murdered someone in this office, I could buy you off if I had enough money. I could probably buy every-



LEFT TO RIGHT: JOHNNIE FINGERS, PETE BRIQUETTE, BOB GELDOF, GARRY ROBERTS, SIMON CROWE, GERRY COTT

one in the office. If that didn't work and somebody spilled the beans then I could probably buy the police. And if *that* didn't work, I'd buy myself an island in the South Pacific, declare it a kingdom, and tell everyone to fuck off.

"That's what I mean. The only true free people are the ultra-rich. Bob Dylan was wrong. 'To live outside the law you must be honest.' I don't agree. To live outside the law you must be rich which implies basic dishonesty."

Geldof quotes Dylan easily. He's articulate in an unassuming way, eager to show that intelligence and the execution of punk aren't necessarily exclusive. He's finding out, however, that as the Strangler's say, "the money's no good."

"I'm fucking broke now. I've got twenty dollars. That's my expenditure for America. I get put up in the Hyatt Regency; I get flown here and picked up in a limo. So what, man! I'm exactly the same as you and the people who will read this thing. I just happen to make music somebody thinks will sell."

The stampede from hallowed record company halls to the dingy holes of Britain's punk pubs is almost comical. One group gets a little publicity and the industry is revolted — for the time at least. When punk finally shows itself to be marketable, the businessmen move in for the kill. The time is ripe to create your own outrageous headline hog.

"If Mick Jagger and I were to walk down a street in London, the fifteen year-olds would only recognize me. I like that. It's great for the ego. It's what I want."

Obviously Geldof is an outspoken performer. His lyrics reek of individuality. His forward attitude is not surprising at all. He clearly lives by the code of at least one Rats tune.

"'Lookin' After Number One' espouses the political philosophy of the band — that of being an individual. Unlike other English new wave bands who get into trite political philosophy and thereby bore the arse off everybody in earshot, we don't es-

Triad

pouse anything like that. In "'Lookin' After Number One,' the end line is 'I wanna be me.' The middle eight is 'I don't wanna be like you.' I don't mean anyone. When I say that I point to the crowd and say 'I don't wanna be like . . . you!' I'm really not interested in being like them.

"I despise the common lot," he continues. "I don't think there's anything more boring than that. I think you should be able to walk down the street and dress anyway you want to. Assert your individuality. The Irish unfortunately have the cloning process down to perfection.

"For example, Johnny Fingers, our keyboard man, wears pajamas. Now you may think that's hilarious but he's worn them since he was fourteen. He got thrown out of school for wearing them. He goes to bed and takes them off. He puts them on when he gets up. That's what he wears for clothes. He has to put up with so much stick because he wants to wear pajamas down the street. But I admire the guy. He's got the bottle to go out and do that. And now in England, half the crowd turns up in pajamas."

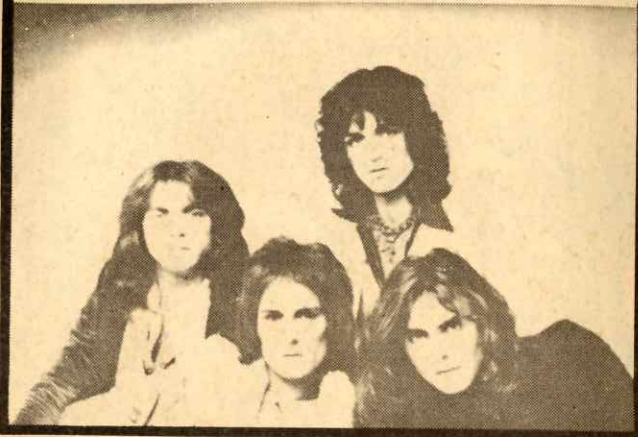
The conversation turns to talk of the pop/punk scene in general. The excitement of it, the unhomogenized feel of it, its stand against the processed pap of Frampton and Fleetwood Mac all enter into the picture. Raw, rough, and rowdy. But not for long Geldof warns; wave today will be the pop music of the future.

"Half the charts in England are made up of new wave. New wave has become seventies pop music. In a year's time, it will be pop music in the States."

An improbably prediction until you think of what music was twenty or thirty years ago. Who would have thought that Electric Light Orchestra or disco Star Wars would grace the Seventies Hit Parade? Geldof only gives one band a chance at cracking the market here at this time.

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"The only rock band America has, and it's one of the greatest bands ever, is the Ramones. They have got pop music down. Someone once called them the Phil Spector sound stripped down to its basics."

He effectively draws the topic away from: the rival band though, and puts his two cents worth in on his fave punk band of all. Natch, it's the Boomtown boys.

"I get off on the Rats. If I wasn't in the band I would go and see them because I like that band. That's a very relevant point but it isn't the motivation point. If I wasn't earning a penny, I'd be doing some other job. But I love the Rats."

"Kids who haven't a clue how to play guitar go out, buy a guitar, plug it in, and . . . bang, bang. They're rock stars because they have the balls to get up and have people laugh at them while they say I'd sooner be up here playing than making noise down there in the audience. That's rock and roll to me. In a month they'll know one chord. In two months, they'll know 3 chords. By the third month they'll be ready for an album. It'll probably go gold, you know. That's what the new wave is about. It's about change. It's a reaction to the music of the past seven years."

Let's not swallow the myth that the anti-music of new-wavers and punks is all apple pie and anarchy. Geldof assures that there's something about his lifestyle that he doesn't care for.

"The thing I dislike about new wave is the rampant hypocrisy and lies. None of those bands will admit to what I've admitted. I don't believe the Clash when they sing about their leftist politics. I know they go out for a 1500 pounds a night. I know they're very famous. If I was to take Joe Strummer's (lead singer) money, the first place he'd run to would be the police. I don't believe Johnny Rotten when he says he doesn't want to be a star.



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## STAGE, PAGE & SCREEN

BY CHARLES W. PRATT

**Stagecraft.** All is not quiet along the Nile. *Nefertiti*, the musical about Egypt's queen, starring Andrea Marcovicci and Robert LuPone, is experiencing plenty of problems during its trial run here, but still plans to head for Broadway at the end of this month. . . . Another play poised to sink its dramatic teeth into Broadway is Edward Gorey's version of *Dracula*, scheduled to open on the 20th. Frank Langella plays the thirsty Count. . . . Martin Scorsese (*Taxi Driver*) is no longer directing Liza Minelli in *The Act*. Old timer Gower Champion has taken over for a spell. . . . William Friedkin (*Sorcerer*) will direct the West Coast production of *Streamers*, the play by David Rabe that caused such a hubbub here last season. . . . Susan Blakely will join the *Vanities* cast at Drury Lane East on Oct. 19. . . .

△

**On the Books.** J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Silmarillion* (Houghton Mifflin) became a bestseller within a week of publication. The 325,000-copy first printing sold out fast. Now 375,000 more copies are on their way. . . . There will be a 2.4 million-copy first printing of Dell's

paperback version of *Roots*. . . . Gracie Slick is at work on her autobiography, and Tammy Wynette will write hers for Simon & Schuster. . . . Ginger Alden, the young lady Elvis Presley was to wed, has sold her story to a national scandal sheet for \$50,000. . . . Philadelphia's Running Press had the bright idea for a paperback glossary series. Now you can translate the jargon of friends who are bankers, sailors, or baseball nuts. . . . Time Inc. shelled out \$63 million for Book-of-the-Month-Club. . . . Pocket Books, competing with Bantam's recent publication of Agatha Christie's *Sleeping Murder*, is reissuing eight Miss Marple mysteries. . . . Israeli



prime minister Menachem Begin was once a terrorist, during Israel's fight for independence. His book about those years, *The Revolt*, is now being considered for a movie. . . . Lawrence Welk has written a children's book. . . .

△

**Film Shorts.** Convicted felon Roman Polanski is hard at work on the script for Dino De Laurentiis' *Hurricane*. . . . Robert Mitchum now filming *The Big Sleep* in London. . . . Marlon Brando will be a principal in the sequel to *Star Wars*. Brando also stars in the \$40 million version of *Superman*. . . . Speaking of the "man of steel" movie, Noel Neill, the actress who played Lois Lane in the Superman television series, will play the mother of Lois in the film. Margot Kidder is the grown-up Lois, and Kirk Alyn, one of the TV Clark Kents, plays her dad. . . . Michael Douglas has finished his part in *Coma*, a medical thriller directed by Michael Crichton. . . . Burt Reynolds and Kris Kristofferson star in *Semi-Tough*, an irreverent look at football. . . . George Burns has a role in the film version of *Sergeant Pepper*. Peter Frampton has the lead. . . . *Carrie* will return to the neighborhoods in time for Halloween.

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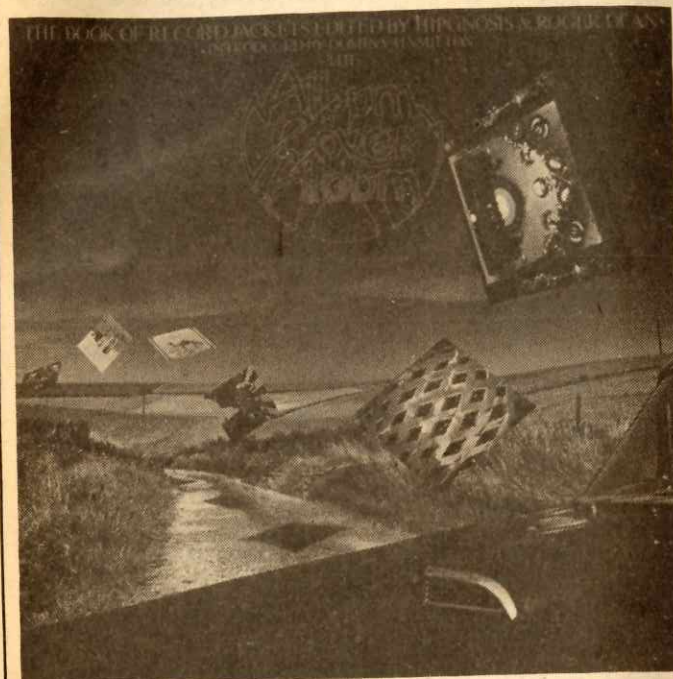
**Magazine Rack.** Marvel Comics continues its saga of *Star Wars* beyond a retelling of the film. First issue follows the adventures of Han Solo and Chewbacca. Now on sale. . . . *Rolling Stone* has moved to the Big Apple, renting a deluxe (\$330,000 a year) offices with a Central Park view. Publisher Jann Wenner has also spent \$750,000 to launch *Outside*, his great-outdoors magazine. *Rolling Stone's* tenth anniversary program will be a two hour special on CBS in November. . . . Clay Felker, erstwhile editor of *New York*, now performs those chores at *Esquire*.

△

**TV Jeevies.** Sara Davidson's *Loose Change* will be an eight-hour miniseries on NBC. . . . *The Prisoner*, ace British series starring Patrick McGeehan as a secret agent man trapped on a surreal island, will be telecast Thursday and Sunday nights on Channel 11. Starts Nov. 3. . . . Nero Wolfe, Rex Stout's portly detective, will be the hero of *The Doorbell Rang*, a two-hour TV movie. Could be the start of a series. . . . Richard Pryor is finished at NBC. . . . And Anita Bryant continues as the commercial voice of Florida orange juice. . . . Channel 2's Neil Derrough will take over operations of WCBS in New York. . . .

△

# BOOKS



**THE ALBUM COVER ALBUM**  
Roger Dean, Hipgnosis, Eds.  
(A&W Visual Library, \$10.95)

One of the latest coffee table books for the rock generation is a volume of contemporary album cover artwork compiled by illustrator Roger Dean and Hipgnosis, Britain's premier album design outfit that has created covers for Pink Floyd and 10cc, among others. Dean's own book, *Views*, showcases his famous Yes cover artwork as well as covers he has done for Osibisa, Uriah Heep, and Budgie. It also contained Dean's futuristic furniture designs and detailed text on his influences and directions. It was, quite simply, a visual joy to leaf through.

*The Album Cover Album* in its 12" X 12" format, provides the same visual smorgasbord with a trip down the not too distant memory lane. Apart from a brief segment on jazz covers from the mid-50's to present and Dr. Demento's (a celebrated wacko musicologist) comments on very early record packaging and its evolution, the book is comprised of albums that have been released since 1963 (*Meet the Beatles*) to present (Eagles' *Hotel California*, ELO's *New World Record*). Printed on high quality color plates (only silver foil covers failed to reproduce well), anywhere from one to sixteen covers adorn each page with information



regarding performer, release date, label, artist and photographer accompanying each one. It's sort of fun to see just how many of these works of "art" you have in your collection.

Of particular note are covers by obscure 60's psychedelia groups, covers with identifying logos (i.e., Chicago), oddly packaged records (Family's *American Bandstand* television; Small Face's *Ogden Nut Gone Flake*), and covers that were released in different incarnations here and abroad.

Of particular disappointment is the lack of coverage on photographer Norman Seeff (who really deserves a book in his own right) and the seeming ignorance of a great many American bands. Also, everyone who has picked up my copy of the book will invariably put it down and say, "Hey, they forgot to include. . ." and then go on to name anywhere from one to a dozen of their favorite covers. You just can't please all of the people all of the time.

The introduction is ridiculously sophomoric, but that's not what you buy the book for. On the other hand, the technical background on the production of an album cover and the description of an art director's job are both interesting reading. The index considerably cross references the names of groups, photographers and artists,

and one fascinating part is to explore each one's style from cover to cover (for instance, the minimalism of Moshe Brakha).

For its few faults, *The Album Cover Album* is a well planned book that provides hours of browsing for the art/music lover. It makes a great gift, and if nothing else can help remind you of that old album you wanted to pick up by . . .

Bill Paige

### THE MAN WHO GAVE THE BEATLES AWAY

by Alan Williams & William Marshall  
(MacMillan Publishing Co. Inc.)

The "new wave" is really quite old. Back in 1959, John Lennon was smashing punks' faces in with his non-Beatle boots. Paul and George once lit a match to a condom, igniting their filthy living quarters in Germany in the process. Shades of Johnny Rotten abound in accounts of the Beatles' formative years in Liverpool and Hamburg.

The tales of *The Man Who Gave The Beatles Away* are fascinating reading, for it paints a picture of the Beatles none of us grew up with. Fans on this side of the

Atlantic remember four clean-cut, innocent-looking boys in collarless suits with hair a mite too long for our parents comfort. It's questionable whether the Beatles would have been embraced so readily in 1964 had they arrived at Kennedy Airport decked out Hamburg style — black leather jackets and pants, holey shirts, greased-back hair and a threatening scruffy, tough look. Teddy boys, they were called in England, greasers in the U.S.

The book digs up the Beatles' roots in a way that Hunter Davies' biography or Brian Epstein's autobiography *Cellarful of Noise*, never did. All the Beatles agree that the Hamburg days were when the group really formed their sound and solidified the group unity.

They were days when John would perform onstage with a toilet seat around his neck and uncaringly address the audience as "fucking Nazis." Days when Paul would sing "Kansas Shitty" with adolescent humor while George played manic guitar. Days when all of them popped Black Bombers and Purple Hearts in an effort to stay awake long enough to "make show" well enough to suit their drunken audience.

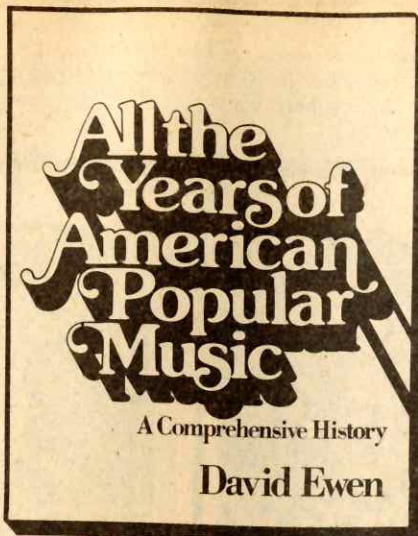
Alan Williams, their first manager, recalls those days vividly, almost too much so for believability. It's highly unlikely that he could recall conversations from 20 years ago with such startling clarity. His recollections of the time and the atmosphere remain valid, however, and even Lennon praised the book as "the only true story" of their early days.

The only flaw to be found regarding the book is Alan Williams. A bitter, frustrated man, he cannot stop kicking himself for having given up their management to Brian Epstein, thus losing the chance at millions of dollars. They failed to give him his commission on their last Hamburg gig and he reluctantly relinquished his position as their manager. These days, he speaks at Beatle conventions on the dead old days of Hamburg, reinforcing his love-hate attitude towards them. The regretful "if only" clauses appear far too often and eventually become an unwarranted intrusion.

Still, you really do have to pity a man who, when Brian Epstein asked his advice on taking over the Beatles' management, said: "Don't touch them with a fucking bargepole."

How fortunate for us all that Brian chose not to listen.

Mindy Goldenberg



**ALL THE YEARS OF AMERICAN POPULAR MUSIC**  
by David Ewen  
(Prentice-Hall, \$19.95)

No matter what we'd like to think, rock and roll didn't spurt full-grown out of the musical blue back in 1951. Like every form of pop music, it is the product of numerous influences, primarily black rhythm and blues and — yep — hillbilly music. The term itself was lifted by Cleveland disc jockey Alan Freed from a black r&b tune, and used as the title of his popular radio show, a program that catered to the teenage audience and soon changed the face of national radio, not to mention three generations of American teenagers. Including us.

David Ewen's massive (777 pages) "comprehensive" history of our popular music outlines the birth, early years, maturity, and continuing evolution of rock, but it does far more. It gets to the roots and traces the development of all the various manifestations of words and music that have entertained our country from colonial times to the present:

gospel, spirituals, folk music, labor movement songs, swing, Broadway musicals, soul, bluegrass, movie scores, television theme songs, jazz, dixieland, novelty songs.

No single volume, even one so weighty as this, can rightly be called comprehensive, but musical scholar Ewen does manage to convey the wide breadth of American music and present an impressive array of facts along the way. A ten-page chapter on New Orleans jazz manages to present acceptable sketches of Buddy Bolden, Sidney Bechet, and Jelly Roll Morton. You may not know it, but these fellows helped to influence and shape the sound of today's jazz-rock fusion. Ewen also talks about the invention of the singing telegram, the life and times of Tin Pan Alley — New York's 28th Street — and the Brill Building. He also tells you the meaning behind those initials you see splattered on all your records: ASCAP and BMI.

Rock fans will find his brief discussions of folk, hillbilly, and big band music enlightening, and may even chuckle over his comments about the "illicit lyrics" of early rock tunes. They'll be pleased to see the space he devotes to such stars and creators as Joni Mitchell, Stevie Wonder, Elvis Presley, Janis Ian, Neil Sedaka, Carole King, Elvis, and Paul Simon. He even has a few words about the musical career of John Prine.

The price of this readable book is a little steep, and you may want to wait for the trade paperback to appear before you invest in a personal copy. But anyone interested in learning about American music in its entirety should tell the school or local librarian to order a copy. *All the Years* is a valuable history and reference work.

Chuck Pratt



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**THE COUNTRY MUSIC ENCYCLOPEDIA**  
by Melvin Shestack  
(Thomas Y. Crowell, \$7.95)

As country music becomes more popular, it becomes important to have reference works about its stars in print. After all, you need a scorecard for any kind of game. Melvin Shestack is obviously a gung-ho country music fan, and awed by the hundreds of talents included in his book. That groupie attitude is this volume's chief weakness, since it's virtually impossible to find any objective criticism of Charlie Rich, or Roy Acuff, or Dolly Parton. Shestack's gee-whiz writing style doesn't make for compelling reading.

Still, this book is valuable for the biographical details it provides — the Hager brothers were born in Chicago; Férin Husky has been married six times — and for the comprehensive listing of country music radio stations it gives.

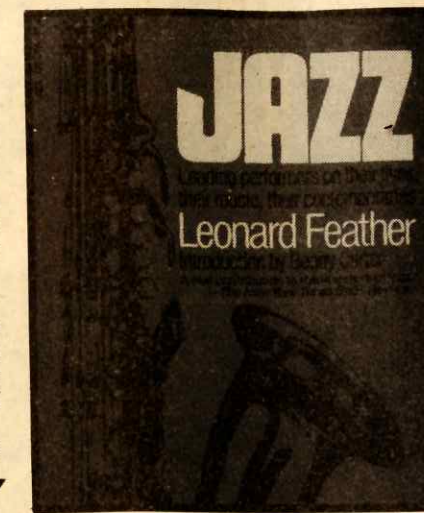
Patty Stubbs

**THE PLEASURES OF JAZZ**  
by Leonard Feather  
(Dell, \$3.95)

Hey, rock fans, listen to this: jazz critic Leonard Feather says there once was a generation that spent years struggling for acceptance from its elders, coped with the problems and pleasures of drugs, suffered attacks on its popular music from "serious" music listeners. Its symbol became a huge outdoor music festival that drew nationwide attention.

Woodstock? No, it was the Newport generation. Feather says that a generation of jazz fans in the '50s took the same brunt of censure from the Establishment that the Woodstock generation endured a generation later. The watershed for both was a musical festival; for jazz, it was the first Newport Jazz Festival in 1954.

Feather's book is a compendium of vignettes, glimpses at some of those musicians who influenced and were affected by the Newport scene. The book is long on personality and short on music analysis.



It is difficult to decide for whom the book was written. Jazz listeners will find it tedious, repeating the same anecdotes that have circulated for years, and frustrating, for with the exception of a piece on reedman Charles Lloyd, the profiles are too short and don't necessarily give a fair impression of the musicians.

The book appears to be written for a young, rock-oriented audience. Feather invites "the progeny of Woodstock" to join "minds and hands with the men and women — some of them graying and paunchy now, but unflagging in their enthusiasm — who represent the Newport generation."

That's fine, but it's doubtful the Woodstock progeny will get beyond the introduction, where various jazz figures

berate rock music.

Critic Dan Morganstern writes, "Rock is almost exclusively a pop music, an entertainment music. Cross-currents have been part of the pictures, but the most advanced rock listeners (that is, those who dig the music, not the social-sexual aspects that dominate it) will, given the exposure, probably defect to jazz."

Newport Festival manager George Wein adds, "Rock is a social music. The intellectual and emotional demands necessary for full appreciation of jazz will probably keep today's youth, or the youth of any day, from relating to it en masse."

Even so, for the rock fan who is curious about jazz and willing to accept Feather's less-than-expedient introduction, the book is recommended. To lure the rockers, there are chapters on Freddie Hubbard, Donald Byrd, Chick Corea and Herbie Hancock that give an idea of their basis in jazz and why they have found popular appeal.

If you make it that far into the book, don't stop before reading the words of clarinetist Barney Bigard and bandleader Mercer Ellington on America's greatest composer, Duke Ellington. The brief chapters on Sarah Vaughan, Dave Holland, Hoagy Carmichael, Mahalia Jackson and others could successfully plant the seed to explore their music more thoroughly.

Feather's book won't compel rock fans to investigate jazz as readily as the late Ralph J. Gleason's column did in *Rolling Stone*. But jazz is an idiom still struggling for popular acceptance of its most accomplished protagonists, and every little bit helps.

Bruce Dold

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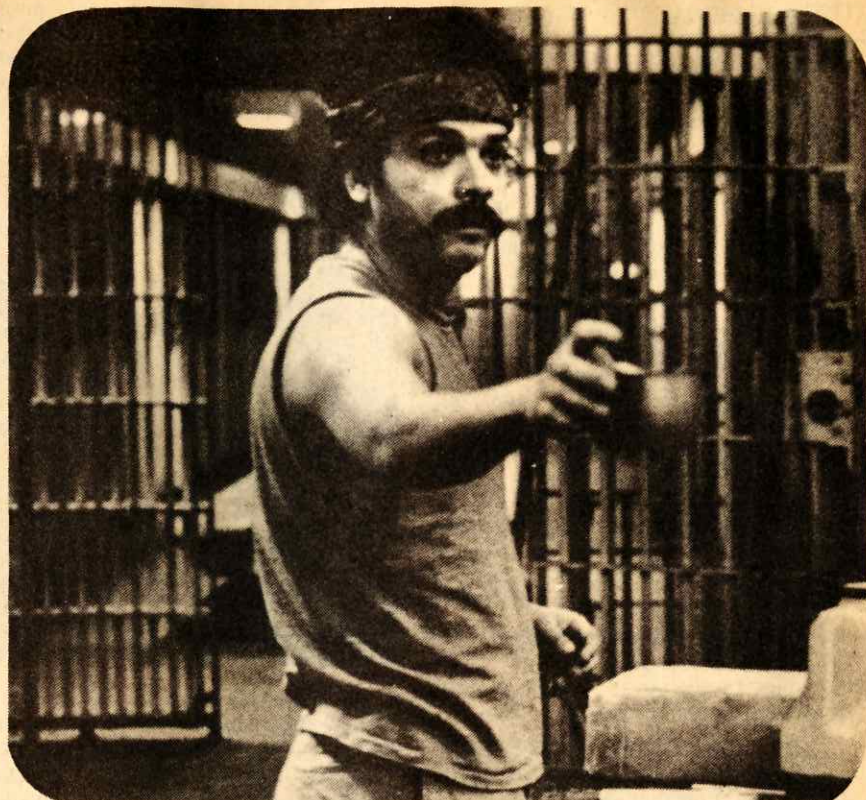
Triad

33

# MOVIES

## SHORT EYES

Written by Miguel Pinero  
Directed by Robert M. Young  
Music and appearance by Curtis Mayfield  
Released by The Film League, Inc.



Award winning plays don't necessarily make for award winning movies — in fact they rarely seem to do so. Of course the Broadway hits written by Neil Simon invariably find their way to the screen and find substantial success at the box office, but end up as strangely unsatisfying amalgams of popular theatrics and cinematic kitsch. Off Broadway, off-off Broadway, and Chicago theatre has rarely found much support in Hollywood, and the successful adaptations of such drama can be counted on a single hand. This, despite the fact that self-promotional awards for more deserving works abound.

Miguel Pinero received such recognition in 1974, when his prison drama, *Short Eyes* won two Obies and the New York Drama Critic's Circle Award. The first Puerto Rican playwright to make a sizeable dent in American theatre, Pinero got his education in the streets, detention centers, and prison of New York. Landing in Sing Sing at age 24, he joined the prison's drama workshop and became something of a poet. His first play, *Short Eyes*, is based on his own prison experiences, and the success of the story as theatre led directly to his debut as screenwriter with his script for the film.

An intense, claustrophobic and disorienting look at the subculture composed of the prisoners in one section of "The Tombs," (Manhattan House of Detention), the film concentrates as much on portraiture of the individual prisoners as it does on the social system within which they operate, making it the most convincing picture of prison life which has ever been seen in a fictional film. Shot entirely on location in The Tombs and using a cast composed almost entirely of ex-prisoners, ex-addicts, and street-wise semi-professionals, *Short Eyes* is

filled with a vitality and authentic humor which Hollywood almost never achieves. Into a section of the prison inhabited by roughly equal numbers of Puerto Ricans and blacks and a mere handful of whites, a society in which whites must tread boundaries with utmost caution, is thrown a middle-class white man being held on charges of raping a 9 year-old girl. Within in the prison hierarchy, no one is more despised than "Short Eyes" (prison slang for child molester), and such a person is subject to continual harassment, threats, and brutality from both guards and inmates. As played by Bruce Davison (*Willard*), *Short Eyes* is a tortured soul out of his element and a man who is unable to remember whether he is guilty of the crime. Desperate for assistance, he finds only one of the other prisoners willing to listen, a Rican named Juan (Jose Perez, Broadway's leading Puerto Rican actor, best remembered for his performance as God in the NET production of *Steambath*). Juan, who maintains some independence from the other inmates by virtue of his prison job, must balance his revulsion for Short Eyes' confession and his compassion for the sick individual. For his efforts, Juan is thrown into the middle of a power play over the attentions of a cute Puerto Rican inmate known as Cupeakes.

Although the atmosphere and space of the film are initially created through the inspired editing of Edward Beyer,

the film soon comes to rely almost exclusively on the cast's considerable acting talents; though the bleak world of prison is captured masterfully in the low-light color photography and the soundtrack is filled with noise and animal-like screams and shouting, the impact and resulting success of the film comes primarily from its concentration on communication.

Much of the credit must go to Jose Perez, who has turned in the year's most outstanding and lifelike performance as the compassionate Juan. Also superb in the role of the malevolent and cocky Paco, Shawn Elliott helps create a portrait of a society to which no viewer would care to belong. Under the direction of television documentarist Robert M. Young, the film becomes an incredibly moving and wholly realistic recreation of a day in prison.

Independently produced and distributed, *Short Eyes* is not the kind of film you would normally expect to see at your neighborhood, both because of the circumstances surrounding its distribution and its subject matter. Far from being a documentary, *Short Eyes* is drama at its finest which draws itself from prison life. Not a film which is guaranteed a long run, it is one which depends on immediate response from movie-goers. It is a film which deserves that support, and also one which pays you back.

Bill Crowley

## KENTUCKY FRIED MOVIE

Screenplay by Jerry Zucker  
Directed by John Landis

First there was *Groove Tube* and then along came *Tunnelvision*, both rapid fire comedy compendiums of skits satirizing the subject of America's national obsession. At times brilliant and devastating, often embarrassingly trite, both films were shot primarily in video and blown up to 35 mm film for commercial release. While that technique kept costs down and constantly reminded audiences that television was the source of the material, it also resulted in terrible visual quality.

The latest film of this genre to reach national distribution, *Kentucky Fried Movie* carefully manages to avoid some of the most serious deficiencies of its predecessors. Although video is employed in several of the skits, the entire project was shot on film, which is appropriate to the

subject of the comedy material. Taking pot shots at the endless series of trailers, announcements, short subjects and informational films to which movie audiences are sometimes subjected, *KFM* offers a series of fake short films and advertisements as a prelude to a zany "feature presentation" — a fractured kung-fu flick.

The best segments of *KFM* are the fictional trailers for upcoming films, which even in real life often manage to make comedies of serious films. The salacious teaser for a soft core exploitation film called "Catholic School Girls in Trouble" adds a totally inappropriate narration to scenes from an adolescent male's sexual fantasies. The trailer for the ultimate disaster film, "That's Armageddon" mixes obviously intentional stock footage with terrible (campy) acting and covers the mess with a bombastic narration which attempts to convince the audience that it is indeed the most disastrous of them all.

Other highlights include phony ads for headache remedies, an hilarious commercial for a board game called "Scot Free" which allows the whole family to work through the JFK assassination, and a cross between a United Appeal commercial and the fake suicides which Bud Cort pulled off in *Harold and Maude*,

all delivered by Henry Gibson for "The United Appeal for the Dead." The height of absurdity is achieved in a takeoff on Miller beer's current television ad campaign in which truckdrivers and construction workers are replaced by off-duty Krishna devotees.

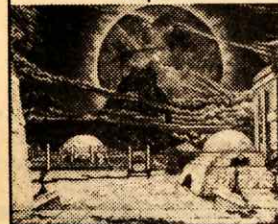
And now for the feature presentation, "A Fistful of Yen" which opens with a shot of the New York skyline over which the title "Hong Kong" is superimposed. In the course of the plot to save the world from the evil Dr. Klahn, our oriental hero becomes entrapped in a deadly version of the "Dating Game" and other madness, only to find escape through the powers of his magic ruby red slippers.

One other skit deserves special mention — the black and white documentary recreation of a courtroom drama which features a special appearance by Tony Dow, in which he recreates his role as Wally Cleaver.

Overall, *Kentucky Fried Movie* is a well executed film which is exceptionally consistent in its comic inspiration. Hopefully its makers will return with more absurdities soon — personally, I can't wait to see one of the films they preview, "Cleopatra Schwartz" — "She is six feet of Black dynamite; he is a short Hassidic Jew. . . ."

Bill Crowley

## KLAATU Hope



## KLAATU Hope

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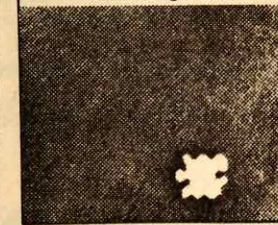


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# THEATRE

**JUNE MOON**  
 By George S. Kaufman/Ring Lardner  
 Directed by Dennis Zacek  
 Victory Gardens



Victory Garden's production of *June Moon* seemed to have the makings of a sure-fire hit — a George S. Kaufman/Ring Lardner comedy, with music by Warren Casey, opening in a sumptuous new theatre — but all it manages is an occasional sparkle, never really igniting.

It's not the play itself that's at fault. Kaufman and Lardner's 1929 satirical comedy revolves around a smalltown lyric writer, Fred Stevens, whose simplicity and old-fashioned morality give him a "fresh slant" on songwriting in the jaded atmosphere of Tin Pan Alley. Fred's naivete also makes him easy prey for Eileen, the sophisticated goldigger with a heart of stone who makes Fred forget all about his sweetheart, demure but loyal Edna. Fred's guilelessness is set off by the worldly cynicism of Max, the veteran piano player. As written, *June Moon* is full of barbs directed at show business, middle class morality, and popular notions of "romance."

The problem with this production is that director Dennis Zacek chose to gloss over the satire and cynicism in *June Moon* and go all out for nostalgia appeal. And that's a shame, because Kaufman and Lardner's biting comments on society are as valid today as they were in the '20's. Furthermore, by playing on the

audience's sentimentality for times gone by, Zacek is trying to evoke just the kind of vapid response Kaufman and Lardner poke fun at.

The actors in the Victory Gardens troupe do the best they can, given Zacek's interpretation of the play. Only Winefred Valentine, as Eileen, falls into the trap of camping it up among the beautifully authentic 20's sets and costumes. Several performers rise above the syrup and give us a taste of what *June Moon* might have been. William J. Norris, as Max, shows that he knows what a wisecrack is and how to deliver it. And Tom Mula, in the minor role of "novelty" songwriter Benny, is marvelous. With his French beret, pencil moustache and Brooklyn accent, Mula's nasal renditions of the wonderfully banal numbers "Hello Tokio" (sic) and "Give Our Child A Name" ("Should a father's carnal sins/ Blight the life of babykins" — in two-four dance time!) are hilarious.

Which brings us to the music: Warren Casey has set the Lardner/Kaufman lyrics to new music and added some completely new songs of his own. The new melodies work just fine with the Lardner/Kaufman lyrics on "Life Is A Game," "Hello Tokio" and "Give Our Child A Name." Casey's own songs are less successful, at least partly because of the way in which the new songs, "Love Birds," "Manhattan Bound Babies," and "Try A Little Dose of Broadway" are presented. The Lardner/Kaufman songs are carefully integrated into the story line, but in this production a pair of vaudeville-style singers have been added to stroll down the aisles crooning Casey's songs. It's an annoying, self-consciously cute touch.

*June Moon* may not be one of Kaufman and Lardner's best works, but it's still first class material. To turn this witty farce into a saccharine piece of nostalgia is an unfortunate mistake.

Christine Harmon

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## by Grant Wylie

The solar eclipse of October 12th continues to dominate the celestial scene. Some of its effects are history by now, but a majority of the events it presages are still in the future. Since the eclipse took place in the 19th degree of Libra, where any occurrence involving the Sun is assured of producing a negative influence, these events could prove to be detrimental in the extreme. Consequently, everyone should exercise care against a real threat of personal catastrophe. Forethought and caution should precede every action in matters of importance; this is the key that will serve to transform the unfavorable energies into a dynamic force that can bring about change for the better.

### WORLD AND NATIONAL FORECAST

Today's Astrology is the grandchild of ancient Ptolemaic arts in the sense that modern Chemistry is descended from Alchemy. Chemists in the modern age make use of a wide range of products first discovered by the Alchemists of old, including

aspirin, ammonia, alcohol, gunpowder, most strong acids, and a host of other useful items. Similarly, modern day Astrologers use celestial formulas of arcane origin.

But Astrology has come a long way since its ancient beginnings. The old formulas are still useful — and why discard something that can still be used; — but they have been refined and expanded by the wisdom of modern Astrologers, with the result that events in our own time can be foretold with even greater precision than ever before. Thus, when viewing the immediate effects of the October 12th eclipse we must temper the wisdom of the Ancients with the wisdom of the moderns.

Astrologers of old believed that when a solar eclipse occurred in the 19th degree of Libra, the death of a great king was imminent. They also believed that its influence prompted revolutions and conspiracies against the world's governments. They maintained that a serious famine would descend upon the land in the winter following this dreaded cosmic omen.

Events that are soon to take place in South America (where the eclipse was total) will confirm the great wisdom of these ancient philosophers. And during the early weeks of 1978 we'll discuss another of their forecasts based upon complex formulation: that the period between February 8th and February 28th, 1978 would be a period of devastating earthquakes.

But for the moment, our attention should be directed toward the chaotic events foretold by modern Astrology in the aftermath of the eclipse, and which will be making headlines in the next ninety days.

Major earthquakes are due to strike the Middle East, as well as southern and eastern Europe. The nation of Austria is especially threatened, as well as that region of the Soviet Union located near the Black Sea and the Caspian. All of these areas are additionally threatened by a cholera epidemic, as some of you long-time readers will recall I predicted last year.

The Far East is also under immediate threat of catastrophic earthquakes. The danger to China seems most immediate, but not long after Japan may suffer similar disaster in the wake of seismic shock waves from another earthquake centered near the Aleutian Islands.

Shortly thereafter the Orient will experience food shortages which could eventually reach crisis proportions in certain areas of the eastern world.

Both the Middle and Far East will see war, riots and political dissent, including an escalation of the conflict between Ethiopia and Somalia. The Ethiopian capital city, Addis Ababa, is likely to be bombarded by attacking Somalis. In the course of the conflict the Somalian city of Haraeisa will be severely damaged, possibly even obliterated.

In the North Pacific area near the Aleutians, the earthquake mentioned previously will threaten mariners by loosing a flotilla of icebergs. A ship and at least one aircraft will be lost as a result.

However, the most important story coming out of the polar regions will relate to the rapid expansion of the polar ice caps. Although it won't make headlines for some time, this story is of major significance. It shows that the earth's climate is growing colder and eventually will force a change in life style for nearly half the population.

Here in the U.S., our government may need to correct various diplomatic errors. This may include limited involvement in one of the many small wars that will be in the news. We'll also be hearing about a disaster relating to the Alaska pipeline.

A U.S. senator may be the victim of a violent crime in the weeks ahead. In addition, we'll see a prominent female politician's personal life drawing heavy criticism. Foreign dignitaries may be involved in this matter.

### FORECAST FOR THE 12 SIGNS

#### ARIES

You are likely to be accident prone. The old adage, "look

"before you leap" applies in all matters. Circumstance may leave you little choice but to break old relationships. Don't despair in these matters. There's definitely a silver lining behind the clouds. A conflict with a short powerfully built male seems unavoidable. People in high places may cause you trouble. It's best to put off any conversations with them.

△

#### TAURUS

Arguments and strife are threatened. Fortunately those who mean the most to you will be on your side even though others who are of lesser importance may treat you badly. Avoid overly egotistical people at all costs. You have some difficulties to face but take heart; when they're over you'll be compensated for your inconvenience. Continue to be alert against physical danger.

△

#### GEMINI

Drastic changes are in store for the next month. Go along with the celestial tides, they'll improve the quality of your life. Make an effort to settle past debts. This allows you to discover unexpected good fortune. Shun the advice of an overly pompous individual who claims to know all the answers.

△

#### CANCER

Disregard your impulses. This is not the time to change the direction of your life. This is the time to stay with tried and proven persons, situations and concepts. By so doing you thwart a trend that could create a crisis. In addition, this accents a strongly favorable set of aspects that will bring you more than your share of good things.

△

#### LEO

Auto problems are threatened for the next month. If you plan on travelling this month it would be best to use some public means of transportation. Take care against theft and deceptive practice until Nov. 12th. Be willing to help your friends do the same. You'll receive important messages soon. Make sure the information is reliable and proceed to follow through.

△

#### VIRGO

Be prepared to give pseudo religious nitwits the burnoff. There will be better ways for you to spend your time. It's time for you to be just as experimental as you can allow yourself to be. Minor departures from your personal traditions just won't make it. Be ready to meet new people and hear a lot of new and exciting ideas. Expand your horizons.

△

#### LIBRA

A hectic but rewarding month is in store for you. Be prepared to deal with extraordinary situations and persons. Avoid exposing yourself to personal danger. Job pressures may approach Triad

an unbearable point in the weeks that lie ahead. Be prepared to meet unreasonable demands from unreasonable people, but don't let them cramp your plans.

△

#### SCORPIO

Be prepared to answer the jealous criticism of rivals or competitors who simply aren't your equal. Avoid long-winded debates over religious or philosophical matters if possible. If you cannot, a large dose of sarcasm will quickly end the problem. More professional recognition is in store for you. Your financial life is favored; make the most of it. Put your unique capabilities to maximum use for the next month.

△

#### SAGITTARIUS

Business and pleasure seem to be intertwined over the next two to three weeks. This trend must be judged as beneficial in the long run even though it may cause some immediate problems. You'll get the chance to have some fun in the days ahead. This includes a wide variety of entertainment. However, the cosmic balance tips in favor of professional and achievement oriented activities. Don't neglect them.

△

#### CAPRICORN

The next two weeks may find you under considerable pressure due to the unreasonable expectations of others. Avoid confrontations with those who place these demands on you. Failure to heed this timely warning could create a variety of job related problems at a future time. Be prepared to tactfully repel those who attempt to force themselves upon you.

△

#### AQUARIUS

A relative or close associate who suffers from hypochondria may cause you undue alarm. Don't let the harbingers of gloom make mountains out of mole-hills. You may also have to deal with certain people who have strange or foolish ideas. Don't let their powers of persuasion overwhelm you. Abandon the unusual in favor of the unprecedented.

△

#### PISCES

The spotlight is definitely on professional matters. The next three weeks would be an excellent time to better your employment situation. You'll find yourself very much in demand. Be willing to seek and accept recognition for your capabilities. There is also considerable emphasis on romantic matters and living conditions. If you seek a change of residence or to enhance your romantic life, now is the time to make your move.

△

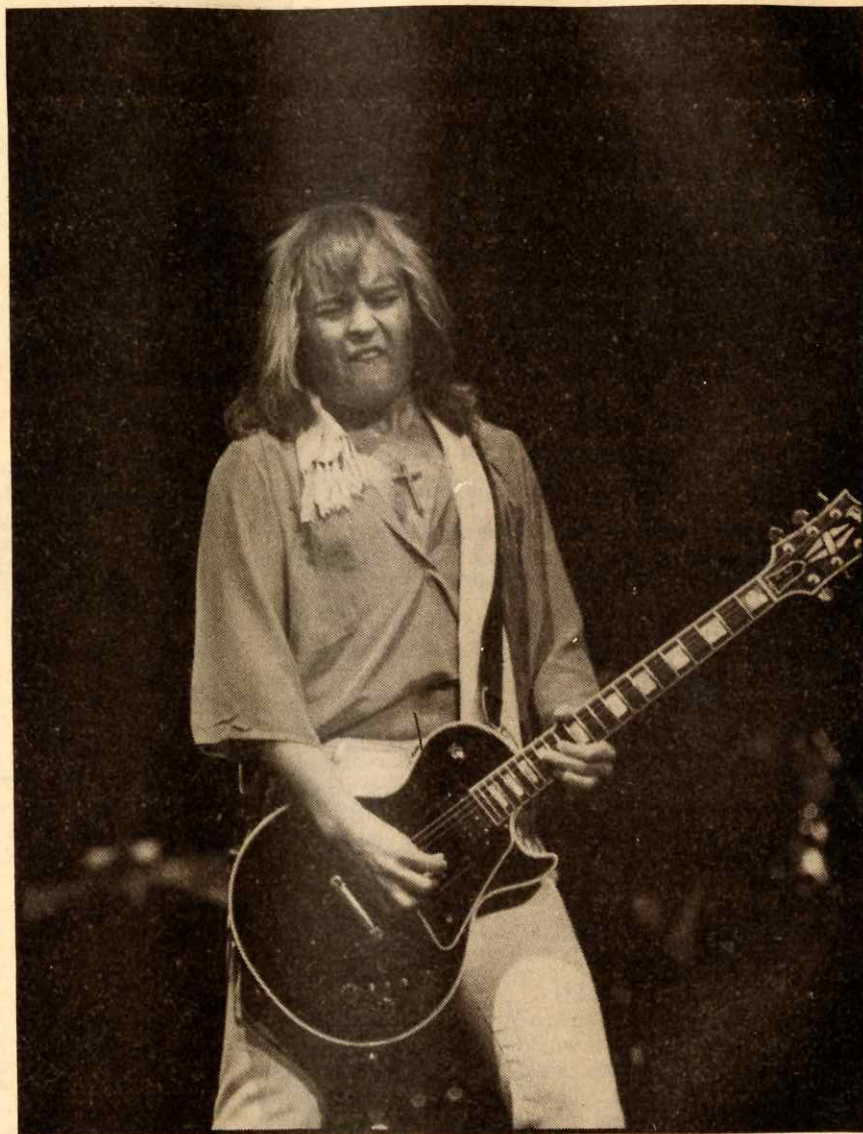
## FOREIGNER Uptown Theater

Chicago has been very good to the new supergroup Foreigner. Radio requests, huge album sales, and another concert in their wallets warmed up the group for the second night, added after the first show was sold out. Foreigner responded with a tightness you'll find in few groups today. Though their one hour set consisted of only ten songs from their platinum debut, both the crowd and the band seemed satisfied.

The band in concert has a number of things going for it. First, the sound system was, for the most part, without flaw. The vocals were distinct, loud, and well mixed despite the number of vocalists. Mick Jones' guitar, though not as loud as Jimmy Page's might have been in the same situation, was vivid. Ed Gagliardi's bass was not only heard but felt as well. Ian McDonald's multi-talented operations were always caught by the aware soundmen. As he switched from keyboards to sax to flute to guitar, McDonald's solos were easily distinguished.

To compliment the technical expertise this group has four strong vocalists. Whereas many groups in concert situations will rely on mechanical device (laser, smoke bombs, mirror balls) to present their music, Foreigner seems content to put their voices in the forefront using instruments as a solid backup. Foreigner is a group in the truest sense of the word.

Lou Gramm handled most of the lead vocals. Resplendent in white rags and blond curls, he struggled to excite the audience without stealing the spotlight from the rest of the band. He's got that proverbial rock and roll voice; nasal, raspy, and able to reach seemingly unreachable notes at the right moment. Gramm won't be playing second fiddle to the Plants and Daltreys of the world for very long.



FOREIGNER'S MICK JONES: WHO KNEW HE COULD DO BEAVER IMITATIONS TOO?

PHOTO/DEAN SIMMON

Mick Jones got his chance on "Woman Oh Woman." Standing stage right behind a slender keyboard, Jones showed that he can handle more than just his guitar. Ian McDonald, formerly of the regal King Crimson, settled for a competent backup vocal role. His instrumental output exceeded expectations. Bouncing with legs akimbo, McDonald seemed totally into the fun of the show.

The only disappointment in the show was the lack of new material. Expecting at least one new song from the group, the audience was turned away unsatisfied.

Whether it was a fear of acceptance or the lack of anything as polished as their album cuts, Foreigner stuck strictly with what is by now very familiar material.

Jay Ferguson opened the show both nights. His years with Spirit and Jo Jo Gunne have not ruined the musician part of him as a change in bands often does. Instead, his strong voice and interesting piano style seem to have reached a peak, though it may be only a plateau. The future will decide that. The problem could be his band; tightness is a word that has yet to enter their musical vocabulary.

Mark Guncheon

## CHICAGO Soldier's Field

"Welcome Home Chicago" read a crudely lettered sign held aloft by two girls during the concert. And Chicago was given a warm if not massive greeting by the city that discovered that they were more than just a bar band at Barnaby's almost a dozen years ago.

Although they have long since trotted off to Los Angeles in search of fatter recording contracts and no wind chill factors, no one can accuse them of forgetting their beginnings. This benefit for Lincoln Park Zoo was the first in a series of yearly concerts they plan to perform for various non-political causes. Hopefully the next one will be of more benefit to everyone concerned.

Despite all the publicity and goodwill surrounding the project, Chicago gave only an adequate concert; nothing more than a pleasant Saturday in the Field.

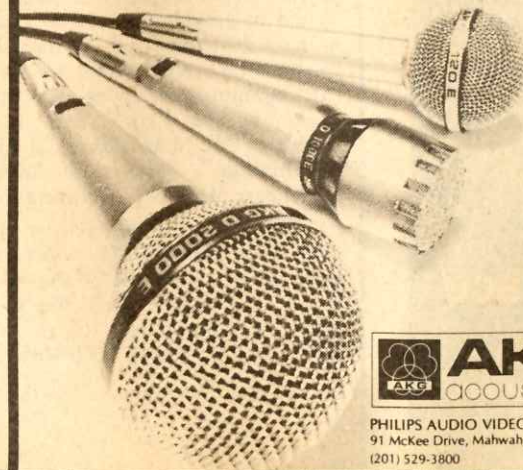
Perhaps they were disheartened by the sight of so many empty bleachers. The approximately 26,000 people attending were swallowed up by Soldier Field's seating capacity of 75,000. Or maybe the general lack of high-pitched hysteria pervading most concerts bothered Chicago. Even a security guard commented, "This is one of the most well-behaved crowds here this summer." Well-behaved meaning quiet; the last outdoor concert of the carefree summer starkly contrasted the



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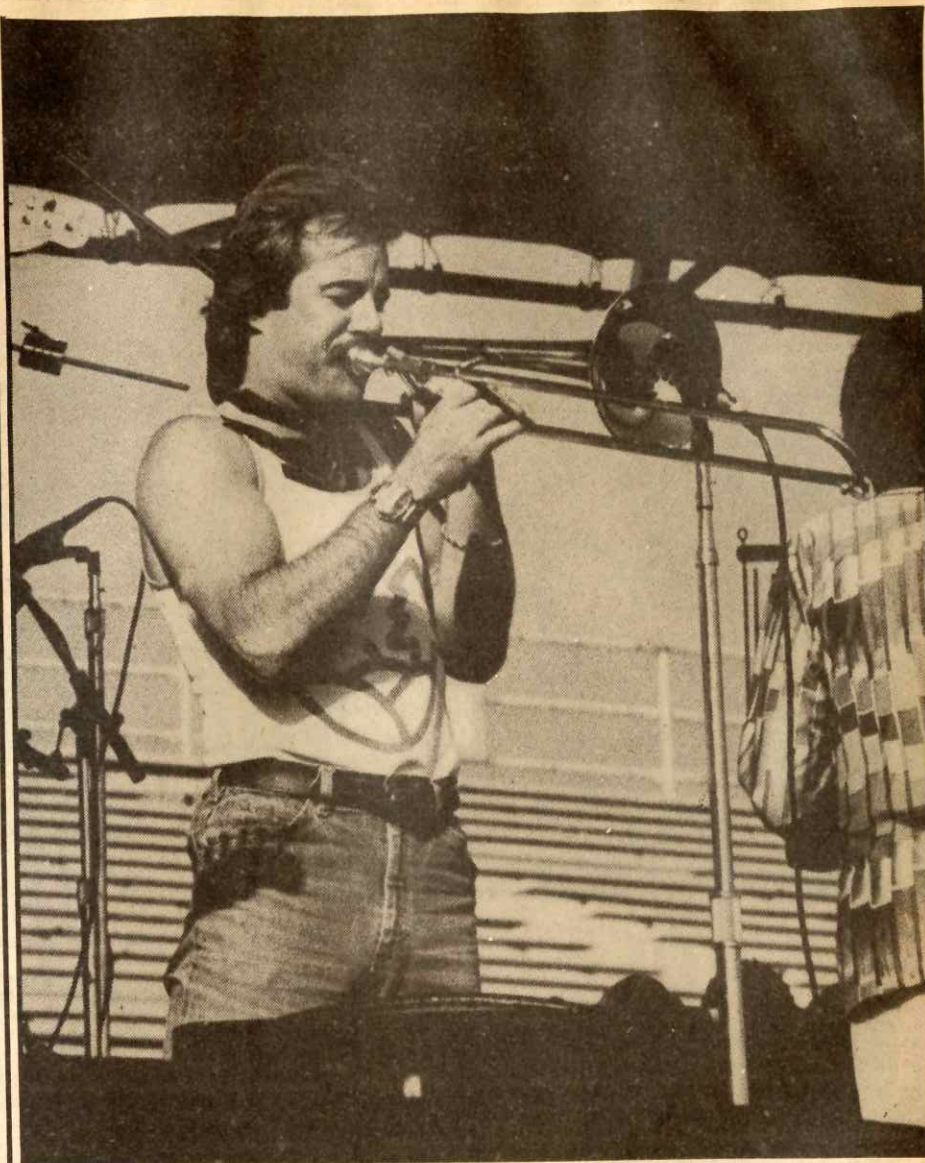
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JAMES PANKOW. . . CHICAGO'S "THANK YOU " KID COMES HOME

chaos surrounding Emerson, Lake and Palmer, Pink Floyd and Peter Frampton.

On the other hand, the sound was generally crisp and distortion-free, with Robert Lamm in fine voice aided by Peter Cetera to provide distinctive Chicago harmonies. Just about all the numbers were immediately recognizable to the crowd, starting appropriately enough with "Saturday in the Park," and progressing through "We Can Make It Happen," "Beginnings," "Make Me Smile," "If You Leave Me Now," ad infinitum.

They updated the concert with some cuts from **Chicago XI**, which sounded good albeit somewhat predictable. Their paean to Chicago "Take Me Back, Chicago," was particularly outstanding with its haunting melody and wistful lyrics.

A real mistake was the unbearably

long drum solo and extended instrumental jam near the end of the show, lulling the crowd into a stupor. Wisely, they came back strong with one of their prettiest songs, "Searching So Long," and a spirited version of "25 or 6 to 4." The encore, surprisingly the Beatles' "Got to Get You into My Life," was well suited to their brass section, and was followed by a rousing "Feeling Stronger Every Day," which left everyone singing.

I have just two suggestions for Bobby Lamm and company. Next time, play a smaller venue, like the Stadium. And to add some excitement to the proceedings, invite the Michael Bilandics onstage for more than just a quick speech — maybe a few choruses of "we can make it happen." See you next year!

Mindy Goldenberg

# TRIAD magazine

## CONCERT CALENDAR



Oct. 14.	Rick Nelson & Tommy James	Ivanhoe Theatre
Oct. 14	Geils	Aragon
Oct. 15	Blue Oyster Cult	Hammond Civic Center
Oct. 15	Richie Havens	Ivanhoe Theatre
Oct. 16	Patty LaBelle	Auditorium Theatre
Oct. 17 & 18	Talking Heads	Quiet Knight
Oct. 18	Seals & Crofts; Corky Siegel	McGaw Hall
Oct. 19	Tommy James	B'Ginnings
Oct. 19 & 20	John Mayall & Long John Baldry	Ivanhoe Theatre
Oct. 20	Todd Rundgren's Utopia	Auditorium Theatre
Oct. 20	Emerson, Lake & Palmer	Bloomington, Illinois
Oct. 21	Santana	Aragon
Oct. 21 & 22	Jose Feliciano	Ivanhoe Theatre
Oct. 22	Iggy Pop	Aragon
Oct. 23	John Mayall	B'Ginnings
Oct. 24	Robert Gordon	Ivanhoe Theatre
Oct. 25 & 26	National Lampoon	Ivanhoe Theatre
Oct. 27	Gato Barbieri; Gil-Scott Heron	Auditorium Theatre
Oct. 29	Cheap Trick	Riviera Theatre
Oct. 30	Steve Martin	Arie Crown Theatre
Oct. 30	Freddie Hubbard	Ivanhoe Theatre
Oct. 31	Rod Stewart	Chicago Stadium
Oct. 31	Buffy St. Marie	Ivanhoe Theatre
Nov. 1	Crosby, Stills & Nash	Chicago Stadium
Nov. 1	Babys; Piper	Riviera Theatre
Nov. 1 & 2	Randy Newman	Ivanhoe Theatre
Nov. 3	Steve Goodman & Leon Redbone	Auditorium Theatre
Nov. 4	Frank Zappa	Uptown Theatre
Nov. 5	Thin Lizzy & Graham Parker	Uptown Theatre
Nov. 19	Billy Joel	Riviera Theatre
Nov. 25	Doobie Brothers	International Amphitheatre
Nov. 25 & 26	Harry Chapin	Auditorium Theatre
Nov. 26	Jean-Luc Ponty	Auditorium Theatre

## ELVIS COSTELLO



MY AIM IS TRUE

### ELVIS COSTELLO My Aim is True (Stiff)

My Aim is True has been floating on my turntable at least twice a day for the past month or so. This hasn't happened at my place since Graham Parker's first release found its way into my living room. Elvis Costello is still going strong, even after four weeks. You wouldn't expect it from the cover though. Costello's cuffed jeans, sport coat and tie, and forked hair is as unlikely a get up for rock and roll as are his Buddy Holly horn rimmed glasses and amusing/attacking fender stance. His appearance reminds me of film comedian Harold Lloyd. Enough of his looks, though. It's the twelve songs on the inside that will make you accept Elvis Costello for what he is, not what he appears to be.

Costello is an incredible writer. His simple love songs are on a par with almost anything I've heard in the past few years. The feeling is there, simply stated, open for anyone to see or hear; "Sometimes I wish that I could stop you from talking when I hear the silly things you say. I think somebody better put out the big light 'cause I can't stand to see you this way."

While that type of writing can be poignant and insightful, Costello can also be cynical; "Now everybody is breaking up somebody else's home before somebody else starts to break up their own."

Of the twelve songs on the album, at least nine of them become immediate favorites. They're all short, averaging two minutes in length. But the lyrics and incredible production of the disc put as much if not more into those 120 seconds as you'll find on any lyrically oriented song.

Musically, the album is filled with both soft ballads and hard rockers. As to who is responsible for the instrumentation no information is given on the jacket or sleeve concerning musicians. Producer Nick Lowe (Keepitasahobby-productions) was involved. That in itself adds a tremendous amount of experience to the disc. His work with Brinsley Schwarz, Graham Parker, and all of his productions on the Stiff label (the world's most flexible label . . . The sound is in the plastic . . . If it means everything to everyone, it must be a Stiff) are quite impressive credentials.

We will just have to wait until Columbia releases *My Aim is True* in the States before we can find out who plays what. In the meantime, if you can't wait to hear it, grab the king today. Elvis Costello that is.

Mark Guncheon



### NEKTAR Magic is a Child (Polydor)

It's not often that an album like *Magic is a Child* is released. The raw innocence of it all (including the song writing), is usually found only on an initial release. The artist's unfamiliarity with the process of recording, playing, and writing results in this pre-professional product. Yes, it is remarkable when lyrics such as these escape the knowing ear of a producer; "Hey come on over, on in/Tell me how your life has been/Does it catch you on the run/Life is like the setting sun/Beautiful but then it's gone . . . Ar yesterday's dreams all that's left on my mind/Nobody answers but the voice from inside . . ."

*Magic is a Child* has this childish innocence that would normally be

accepted for what it is by me. Unfortunately, this isn't Nektar's first release. They're not children at play. You couldn't tell it from this collection, however.

Space, Man. It's really cosmic, you know, what with lyrics that revolve around phrases like "train from nowhere," "the liquid roar," and "the cheese in the sky." Rarely have I found so little in so many words.

When the lyrics of a song fail, one can still accept the song if the instrumental part speaks louder. In this case, Nektar seems faced with another problem. While the guitarwork is fairly interesting throughout, especially on "Listen," the remaining instruments struggle to present what is accepted as the Nektar sound. A heavy use of keyboards and various basses combined with a pulsing percussion section succeed only in presenting a mild sense of rhythm.

As a result, they have to rely on Dave Nelson or Mo Moore's vocals to fill in the holes. A good deal of reverb accomplishes this. A solid synthesizer would have sounded great at particularly crucial moments, but we hear only "watching the sand/Pass through an hourglass painting the blue in the skies." More creative input was expected from member Larry Fast (of Synergy fame), but not delivered.

Nektar's last album was a minor commercial success for them. It brought to the somewhat obscure group the exposure needed to enter the U.S. record market. With a change in labels since then, a strong follow up album was hoped for. *Magic is a Child* just isn't that album.

Mark Guncheon

### SPARKS Introducing Sparks (Columbia)

It's actually their seventh album. Having always been the bastions of social propriety however, it is fitting that Sparks "introduce" themselves now to the legions of music fans still unacquainted with them. (Emily Post would have approved.)

Sparks are Russel Mael, wide-range vocal gyrations and Daltry-Plant-rock-idol-stance; and Ron Mael, keyboards and Adolph Hitler anti-rock-skinny-tie-creep-stance. They're brothers. Together, with the assistance of constantly changing sidemen, they make some of the most innovative music of the day.

They're "poseurs" like Roxy Music, macho, like the most ballsy of rockers,

effete, like the least ballsy of rockers, frenzied, melodic, satiric, and sentimental.

They're all of this, and none of it. No matter what familiar chord they strike, there is always that feeling that they're . . . off kilter.



The best examples of Sparks are *Kimono My House*, *Propoganda*, and *Indiscreet*. These are their least derivative albums. They contain the most unrestrained examples of musical assault (the vocals alone involve the cramming of about 20 syllables into one measure), versatility, (everything from a minuet waltz to steamroller rock) and sociological exposes.

Yet, this is nowhere as dissonant as it sounds. The lyrics touch familiar emotions; puberty is when one notes that "girls grow tops to go topless in," the end of domestic security sends one "back to swinging in the trees," and the simplest way to drive someone home is by pointing out "there's my car."

And the melodies stick, so beautifully, in fact, that you could fall in love to them.

But such appreciation doesn't come easily; the ear does have to stretch a bit. One album ago, Sparks did some bending of their own: They chopped the vocal lines into digestible portions, dispensed with much of the outside instrumentation, and boosted the drums and guitars to spine-decalcifying levels.

The album, *Big Beat*, can compete with any powerhouse album in existence. But even better, Sparks remained Sparks.

*Introducing Sparks* is even more encouraging; not only musically but also in terms of what it says about their direction. They want commercial acceptance (who doesn't), but they aren't trying to obtain it by locking into one genre.

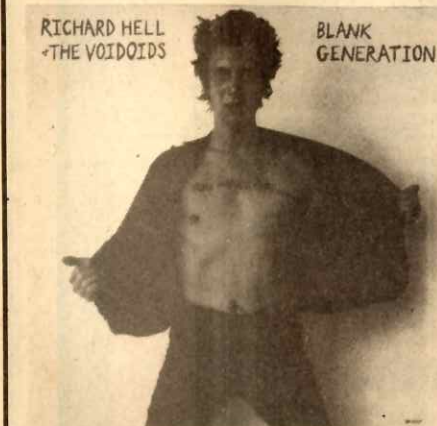
*Introducing Sparks* is to Beatles/Beach Boys pop what *Big Beat* was to gut rock. As always, the identity remains intact. Russel tries to score with the line

"Where is that Yankee ingenuity?" and unveils an imaginary stable of women including everyone from Dinah Shore to Eva Braun.

The backdrop, however, is no longer elusive melody. The hooks are right up front, as sweet and clean as the best of the Raspberries and 10cc. Also, for the first time on a Sparks album, background vocalists supply the appropriate flourishes, although not always in expected places.

The result is a weirdly wonderful merging of the romantic with the avant-garde. For the initiated, it's an album that should be shared with "that twisted someone." For the uninitiated, it's a perfect introduction.

Art Collins



### RICHARD HELL AND THE VOIDOIDS Blank Generation (Sire)

Richard Hell is a fixture of the New York new wave scene. It's about time we've gotten an album's worth of music and thought from the man. His EP on the Ork label satisfied me for awhile, but his past association with Television along with the three songs on the seven inch disc fostered a cult growth, finally culminating in this Sire release.

This album features new versions of two of the Ork songs as well as new material from Hell. While "I Belong to the Blank Generation" seems to be the anthem of many young punks these days, Hell does have a couple of other songs that deserve the same interest and affection. Hell's writing compares favorably with any of the new wave, revealing personal thoughts, actions, and feelings from the gut, not the Thesaurus. It seems that Hell has experienced the depressing New Scene for awhile.

"Love Comes in Spurts," "Liars Beware," "Betrayal Takes Two," "Who

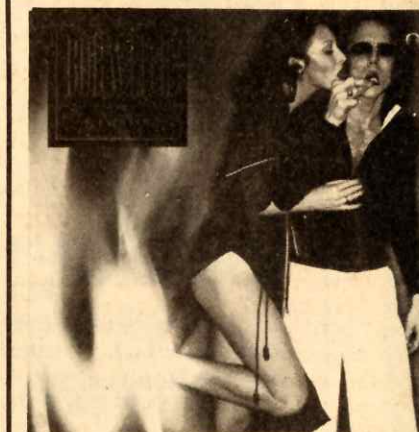
Says (it's good to be alive)" are just the titles. The lyrics that accompany them reveal a tough innocence earned and protected by years of life in the gutter (both figuratively and literally).

Should the lyrics scare you away from the baseness or crudeness of Hell, the music itself should frighten you from the punk scene forever. The only thing that will sound familiar is the incessant beat of the cymbal and snare. Robert Quine and Ivan Julian trade guitar licks, leads, and slashes regardless of proper chordal arrangements but that isn't important. It's the sound that creates the feeling. Their scratchy instruments can rip any speakers to shreds if played a little past the comfort threshold.

Hell's voice could too. Reminding me of Television's Tom Verlaine, Hell uses his whining screeches throughout the disc, stalking up and down the scale, hitting all the notes as well as inventing a few along the way.

I especially like how he vomits at the end of "Another World." Joe Cocker would be proud.

Mark Guncheon



### BOB WELCH French Kiss (Capitol)

Bob Welch has found the key to successful popular music—accessibility. Fleetwood Mac, of which he was a member, unlocked the door to superstardom with a similar realization in the production of their white album. As a matter of fact, Mick Fleetwood, Lindsey Buckingham, and Christine McVie appear on this otherwise solo effort with a re-doing of "Sentimental Lady" (originally on *Bare Trees*). So, from Fleetwood Mac and the critically accepted Paris comes Bob Welch, and an absolutely superb album. If this one doesn't propel Welch into air play saturation, many folks will be mighty surprised and disappointed in the state of the art.

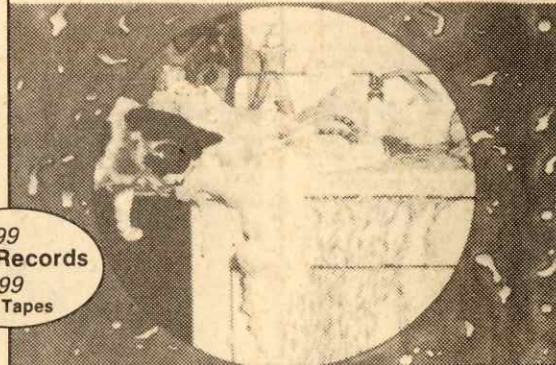


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The framework of the album is similar to Fleetwood Mac's Rumours, musically and lyrically. And Welch's product is every bit as good. Welch has learned from and embossed them with some excellent guitar, bass and vocal work. As he sings in "Sentimental Lady" (and the thematic reason for the song's inclusion), "That's why I travelled so far/Cause I come so together/Where you are." French Kiss is so together that three cuts are repeated versions of the same song. "Close My Heart," "Loose your Heart," and a thirty second segment taken from them, are appropriately interspersed and give the impression that this LP is actually variations on a theme. Witness the lyrics of the trilogy; "There's always one that loves more/What I want to know, do I wait for you/Or is it me that you're waiting for?" and "You made me lose my heart/ But did you lose your heart to me?"

Rarely did Paris or early Fleetwood Mac write so perceptively or meaningfully, to use a word largely ignored in the rock establishment. Hearing this album will bring back the feelings, questioning and hopeful, of a new love or one lost.

Accessibility—the lyrics touch you, involve you, in your mind and in your heart, and the music is straight ahead, clear, crisp, and will wrap the words up in such neat packages that you'll want to carry them home with you.

In a sense, this album is a constant refrain recalling the Rumours style. The line "You made me lose my heart" that is repeated frequently on French Kiss could easily have been the title of the former album. When Welch sings, "We both can't be wrong/I must be right," one senses exactly how close he comes to duplicating the current emotions of his former group.

If that isn't convincing enough, the opening riffs on "Outskirts" ought to bring back Mac's past. It would probably be silly to say that almost every cut on this lp has a chance for hit status. As a friend of mine used to say, there isn't anything that's not great. We will be hearing a lot more from Bob Welch. He has "a will to be merry" that exudes, and this French Kiss promises to be the start of much merry-making for the listener.

Sal Manna

Steve Martin



STEVE MARTIN  
Let's Get Small  
(Warner Bros.)

Steve Martin, that ramblin' guy with an arrow through his head and a banjo on his nose ("I get paid for doin' this"), has added an album to his bid for celebrity in big time show biz. That's Johnny Carson-Vegas-big bucks show biz as opposed to Mike Douglas-concert opener-semi bucks show biz.

You'll know that he has sold out completely as soon as you see him doing play by play at a Thanksgiving day parade, or if he changes his name to Stevie or if he starts paying tribute to the heroism of Totie Fields. Also if he starts rubbing Sammy Davis Jr. on his white fro or complimenting Merv Griffin on his suit.

Martin would have displayed a more heartening trend if he had included a half dozen long, skinny balloons in each album so the listener could tie them around his head while listening to get in the right mood for Martin's brank of yucks.

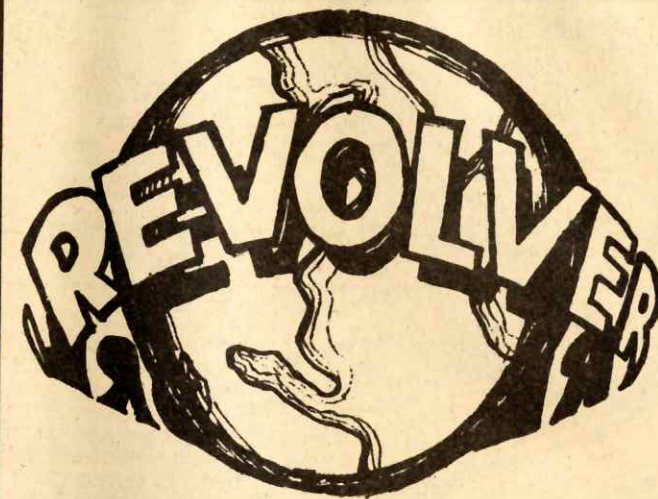
The album, called Let's Get Small, is an in-club recording of Martin's night club act — minus, mercifully, most of the sight gags which would come across as just a lot of frustratingly unexplained laughter, something Richard Pryor has never figured out how to avoid on record. Martin's act may appear to be loose, but it apparently changes very little from show to show. If you saw him at Amaz-ingrace last year or at the Ivanhoe earlier this year, you have essentially heard the album. But, it's still hilarious. Martin may not have a lot of variety yet, but he does have enough good material to put out an album that will make you laugh until your face hurts, especially if you get small before putting it on the turntable.

Since Martin didn't include any balloons in the album, you might try to get in the right mood by putting half a pound of cream cheese down your pants. But if you do, be sure to stay in a cool place.

Rob Wishart

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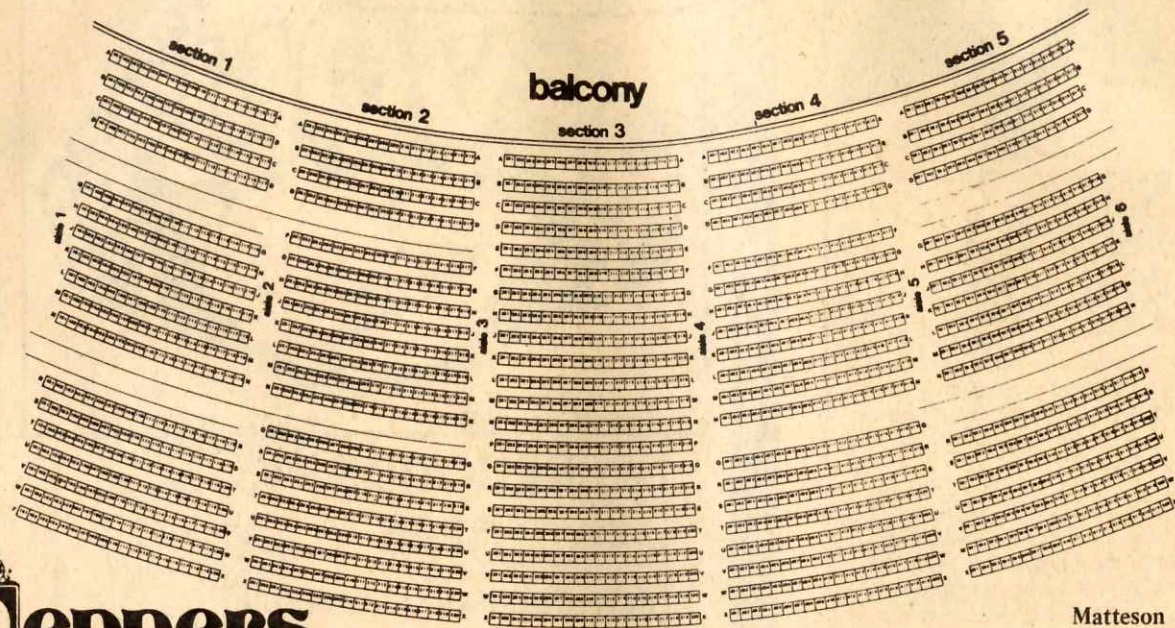
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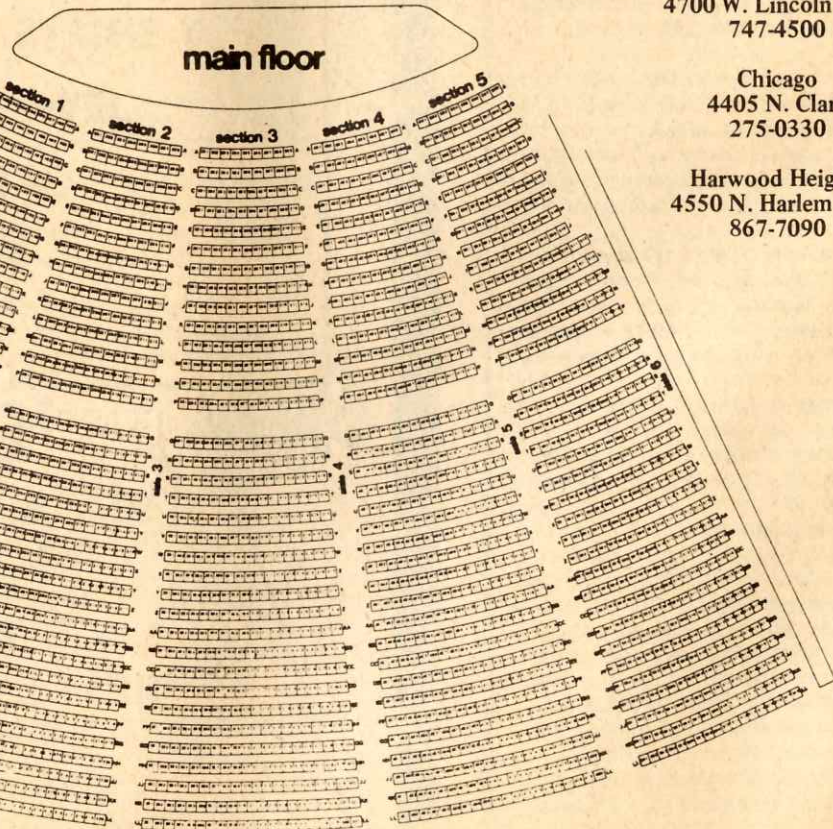
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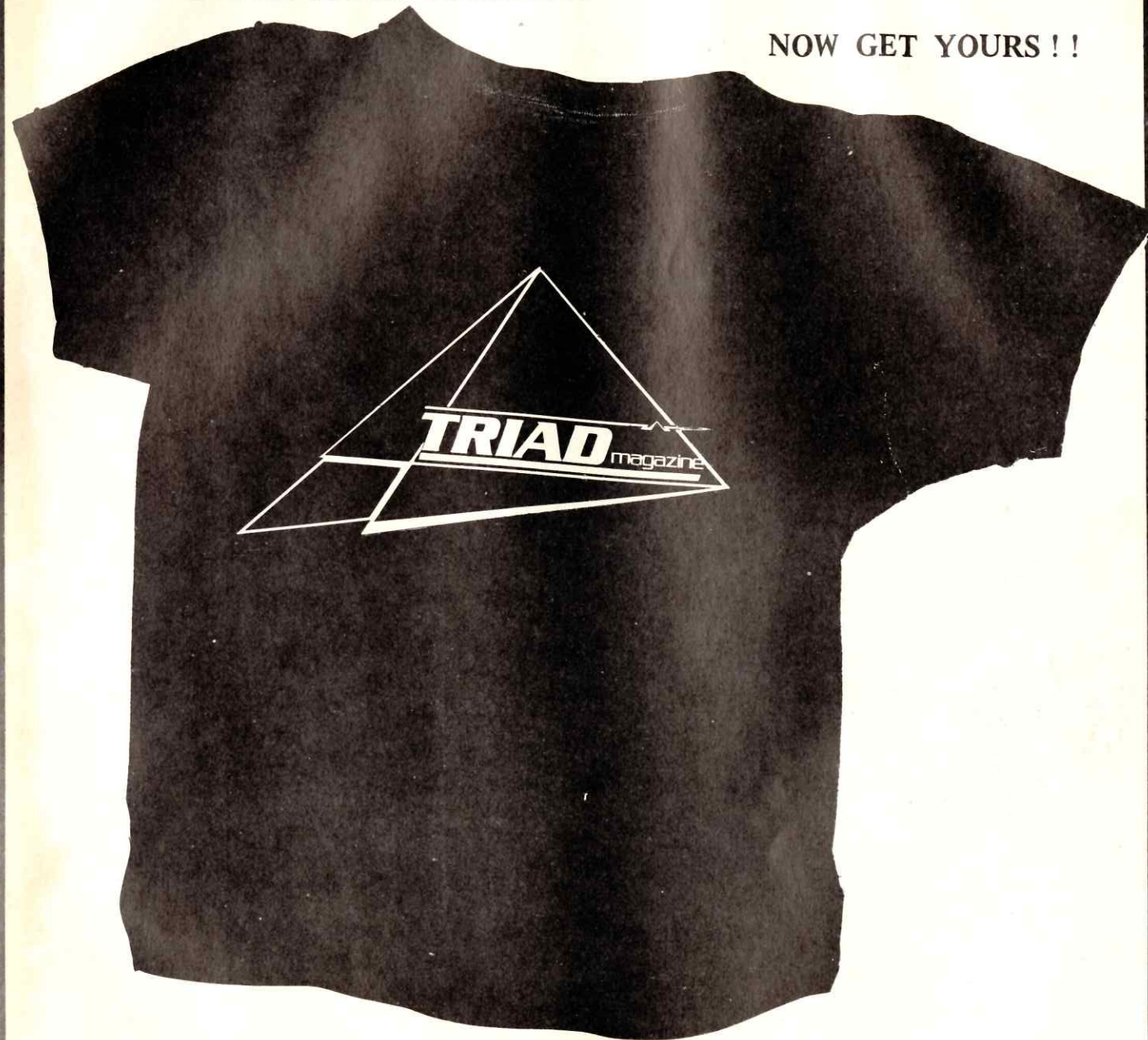
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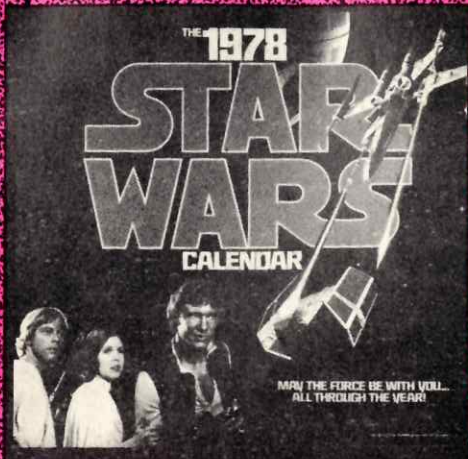
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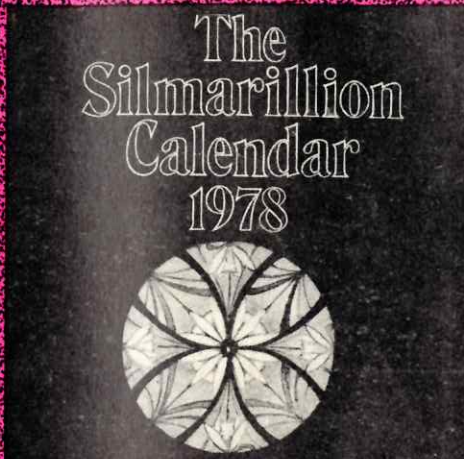
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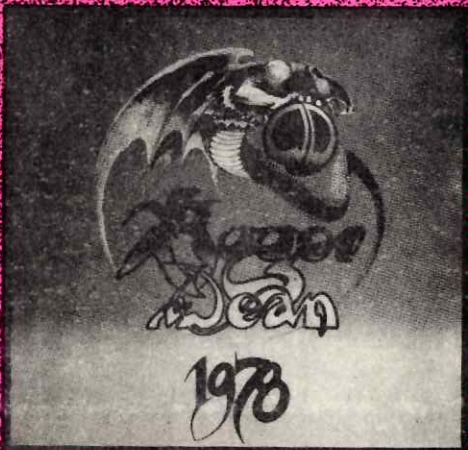
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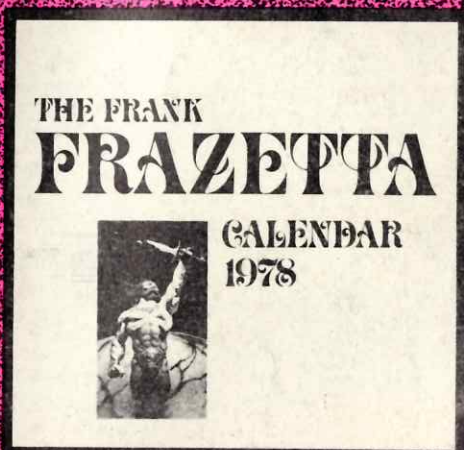
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